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BIOGRAPHY.

Memoir of the Rev. William Parry, late Resident and Theological Tutor at Wymondley Academy, Herts.

(Continued from page 261.)

As Mr. Parry's letters to Lord Aylesford were his first attempt at authorship, and gained him great credit, we shall be the less scrupulous in making some extracts, which will at the same time put the reader in possession of Mr. Parry's mode of thinking, and reiterate those sentiments which were to him, in common with his brethren, dear as life itself.

One of the resolutions of the meeting at Warwick was, "that the right to share the public employments and emoluments of a state is, like all other rights in a state of society, subject to the control of a supreme power, that is, the legislature." Here Mr. Parry examines the general principle laid down, viz. "that *all rights* in a state of society are subject to the control of the supreme or legislative power;" and urges that if this doctrine be true, "a state of society must be worse than the most savage state of nature;" that the very end of the institution of government would be defeated; that it would be impossible in that case for a bad legislature to do wrong, it would only control what had been surrendered to its disposal; and thus legislation, instead of a blessing, would become a curse, to mankind. After demonstrating the natural right of every good

citizen to life, liberty, and property, independently of the control of the legislature, he proceeds to urge the same natural claim on behalf of conscience, and thus expresses himself: "Every man has a right, my Lord, to judge for himself in matters of religion, to form and enjoy, without interruption, his own religious opinions, while he does not injure the peace of society. Is not this a right *unalienable* in its own nature? Is it by the social compact surrendered to the legislature? Can any government have authority to make laws, that all men shall think alike in religion? Or if it has the authority to *enact*, has it the power to *execute* such laws? Can the edicts of the state enlighten the conscience, or the power of the sword convince men of the truth of abstract propositions? If the principle of the resolution be admitted, the foundations both of civil and religious liberty would be destroyed, and the right of property be taken away. If the supreme power may control and govern, abridge, or withhold *all the rights* of men, it is of little consequence whether that unbounded authority center in one person, or in a thousand: a foundation is equally laid for *despotic* rule, and, in that case, it might be more eligible to have one tyrant than many." Reverting to the revolution of 1688, he says, "all rights, therefore, in a state of society are so far from being subject to legislative control, that there are certain rights

which, if the supreme power invades, it breaks that original compact with the people, by which it exists, and virtually forfeits its own authority. To deny this, would be to deny the principle on which the revolution was founded, to which the church of England owes its security, the kingdom its liberties, and our present gracious sovereign his title to the crown."

In short, this doctrine seems to be no other than that imbibed by the House of Stuart, and its adherents, that the king or the supreme power is in the place of God to a whole nation of human beings, and that, therefore, they are all made to worship and serve that supreme and sovereign power, without ever daring to dispute its will and pleasure: a doctrine undoubtedly true in regard to God, the supreme ruler of the world, but inadmissible with respect to any supreme power in a free country. Mr. Parry, as a man, an Englishman, and a minister of the gospel, no matter of what particular denomination, stood up against such despotic principles, animated with a portion of that dauntless spirit of freedom, which in former days successfully resisted the encroachments of arbitrary power. He breathed it on his native mountains; and it is to be hoped as liberty has never wanted an asylum* among Protestant Dissenters, so she may always find a Parry for her advocate.

In his second letter he disentangles a sophistical resolution which insinuates that the dissenters hold the opinion that "the offices and emoluments from which by law they are excluded, are rights indiscriminately laid open to the claim of every citizen."

* *Nos, terrarum ac libertatis extremos, recessus ipse ac sinus fame in hunc diem defendit.—Speech of Galba, in Tacitus's Life of Agricola.*

Here our author makes an important distinction. "As to offices of trust and emolument in the state," he says, "no citizen, my Lord, as such, has a right to possess them. They are not *rights* open to the 'claim' of any citizen *whatever*, but are, as the meeting properly observed, *trusts*, to be conferred at the discretion of the crown. No subject considered merely as such, hath a right to bear office in the state, or enjoy its emoluments; but every man, not a criminal, has a right to be *eligible* to office. A right to office can only be derived from the appointment of the executive power; but to be *eligible* to office, to be in a capacity of receiving such an appointment, if the executive power should think him fit for the public service, is the right of every obedient and faithful subject. Dissenters, my Lord, do not *claim* offices of trust, power, or emolument. They do not consider them as *rights*, the idea would be absurd. But they claim exemption from reproach, from unjust disqualifications, from opprobrious stigmas. They claim this as the civil right of every peaceable and orderly citizen in the state; of every loyal subject of the British crown. A brand of infamy is undeservedly fixed upon them; and, as if they were without distinction, treacherous and disloyal, they are disqualified for the meanest office in a borough, or the lowest trust under the crown. In such circumstances, they consider themselves as deprived, on account of their religion only, of those civil rights which equally belong to all orderly and faithful subjects in the state."

These sentiments cannot be too often reiterated, till the national faith, which, for more than a century, has stood pledged for the repeal of these odious and unjust statutes, shall have redeemed its honour, and all classes of Britons

of fair character shall be deemed equally eligible to serve their country, whatever modes of religious faith or worship they may individually profess.

Mr. Parry next exposes the invidious tenet, that "the legislature has a right to confine public employments to persons professing the established religion of the country, if it shall appear *expedient* for the public good;" by asking, "can it ever be *expedient* for the *general* good that none should fill offices of trust, or even be *eligible* to them, but members of the establishment; unless it can be proved that talents and abilities, honesty and fidelity, are confined to them. Would it not be wise and politic therefore to employ, in the public service, any faithful, loyal subjects who have abilities for its different departments, however various their religious tenets? Do not other nations act upon this principle, and find the public good promoted by it? Would not the adoption of such a measure in England, conciliate the esteem and affection of subjects of every description, teach them to forget religious animosities, in the more generous affection of love to their country, and give the kingdom a greater degree of harmony and firmness in all its exertions against foreign enemies? Would it not therefore, by producing such a *union*, most effectually subserve "the *public good*?" Supposing, however, for the sake of argument, that the *public good* were the good of the *established church only*, the test laws are an insufficient provision for promoting that object. What danger could possibly occur to the establishment, if those laws were repealed? It would then be at the will of the executive power, whether to appoint one dissenter to office or not. Is the present government so little attached to the church,

that there would be any danger of its making an indiscreet use of its discretionary power? Need the church fear to trust her interests in the hands of the crown? If dissenters were appointed to civil offices in common with their fellow subjects, how could the security of the church be in the least shaken thereby? Would not the act of uniformity, the rich and ample revenues of the church, and the connexion between its interest and that of all the great families in the kingdom, still secure its prosperity, and the number of its adherents? Is it impossible it should stand, but upon the *ruins of justice*, and the *subversion of the civil rights of dissenters*? Would not the church enjoy her ritual and all her emoluments, untouched by any but her own members, although a dissenter might have a post in the army, or a commission in the excise? It is difficult to conceive, how a presbyterian sitting in the long room at the custom-house, could push a prebendary out of his stall; how the foundations of the church could be undermined by a dissenter examining a wine-vault; or how the steeple should totter before the guaging rod of an exciseman."

He then concludes the letter by showing the *insufficiency* of this test, even admitting it to be *expedient*; as, in fact, the tendency of it is merely to exclude *conscientious* persons, and consequently the most eligible persons, from places of *trust*.

The meeting had thought fit to say, "that the provisions which the wisdom of the legislature has thought fit to make by the corporation and test acts, for the security of the church and state, have been found sufficient to answer that purpose, and that it is highly expedient to continue them in force." The following extract will illustrate Mr. Parry's happy talent at exposing a *fallacy*. "If

the church and the state, my Lord, be considered as connected together, the consequences of calling the test laws 'a wise provision' for their joint security, will show the assertion to be equally ill-founded. If it be a provision for the safety of the civil constitution, and the ecclesiastical establishment, it is *weak* and *insufficient*. It provides against a dissenter's occupying a trifling out-post, but betrays the citadel at once into the hands of the dangerous foe. It locks him out of the custom-house, but admits him to take a seat in St. Stephen's chapel. If dissenters were inclined to injure either church or state, where could they do it so effectually as in parliament? There, if in any situation, they would be dangerous. But the experience of more than a century has proved that they may be admitted into parliament, and act as legislators, without the smallest danger to the church or the state. If this fact be connected with the doctrine of the resolution, the most absurd conclusions would follow, such as these: dissenters may sit in the British senate without any risk to the public; but should they have a place in the council of a corporation, the constitution would be at stake. They may have a vote in making laws for the government of the *whole* kingdom, and no bad effects follow; but should they have a voice in making a bye law for a *petty borough*, the kingdom would be in danger. They may have seats in parliament, and be joined in the legislation of their country, without their influence being the occasion of any alarm; but should they occupy a post under government in the most *distant* plantations, their influence in the concerns both of church and state would be increased to a degree inconsistent with the *safety* of either. They may, with the

other representatives of the people, hold the strings of the public purse, and the property of the kingdom remain safe; but, should any part of the revenue be intrusted to their hands, the nation would be on the eve of bankruptcy. They may assist in enacting laws by which the civil or ecclesiastical constitution might be altered, improved, injured, or changed, and both church and state remain in *perfect security*; but should they, as officers of his Majesty's customs, surprise and overpower a party of smugglers, not *they*, but the constitution would be overturned, the mitre would fall to the ground, and the crown itself be in danger! To state such absurd reasoning is to refute the principle which necessarily leads to it."

We have given greater prominence to this act in Mr. Parry's life than our limits will allow to some others, as we wish that these just sentiments and this spirited conduct should be held up to the view of the rising generation, who, we fear, stand sometimes in danger of forgetting the great principles of liberty for which their ancestors "suffered the loss of all things." And we devoutly hope they will not cease but with life to endeavour to transmit to posterity their noble cause, losing by age nothing of its majesty and invincibility. Our friend's attempt to support and further the cause is worthy of imitation. Unhappily that application was much more unsuccessful than at former times: the indiscretion of a few intemperate spirits, afforded a handle to interested persons for misrepresentation, and occasioned groundless suspicion in the more liberal: but, as it is the cause of truth, justice, and sound policy, some future application to parliament, we will hope, may be attended with the desired success; and surely nothing is more likely to contribute

to it than to be animated with the spirit of our late revered friend. It may be said of him,—“ He hath done what he could.” Let the same be said of us. While we assert our right, let us show that we deserve it should be conceded; but, above all, let us commit our cause into the hands of Him who “ loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity.”

This pamphlet, both from the merits of the subject, and the method of treating it, drew the public attention to its author, and first brought him into notice. It went into a second edition, and was highly approved of by those whose esteem is most worth having. Encouraged by this general approbation of his labours, Mr. Parry, next year, offered to the public another pamphlet, connected with the former subject, intitled, “ Thoughts on such Penal Religious Statutes as affect the Protestant Dissenters; most respectfully submitted to the Consideration of the Honourable Promoters of the Bill in favour of Protecting Roman Catholics.” The object of this pamphlet was to plead, that, as the Roman Catholics had just obtained a repeal of many persecuting statutes, there was as good reason why the Protestant Dissenters should enjoy the same privilege. He pursues the argument on the ground of reason, humanity, christianity, and civil and ecclesiastical policy; and, if things were conducted in this world always on these grounds, the cause which he advocated would, long ago, have been triumphant. As this subject is an amplification of the former, we shall not enlarge on this performance; though, in point of importance or execution, it cannot be considered as at all inferior. As a specimen, however, of Mr. Parry’s ability for depicting tender scenes, arising from the peculiar sensibility of

his own heart, we select a passage which cannot fail to interest every reader. Arguing for the repeal of all penal statutes on the ground of religious differences, as shocking to *humanity*, he proceeds; “ If the tear-fraught eye of humanity could behold the scenes of misery which have been caused by our penal religious statutes, how greatly would she be shocked! Look into that damp and dreary cell, through the narrow chink, which admits a few scanty rays of light, to render visible to the wretched his abode of woe. Behold, by the glimmering of that feeble lamp, a prisoner, pale and emaciated, seated on the humid earth, and pursuing his daily task, to earn the morsel which prolongs his existence and confinement together. Near him, reclined in pensive sadness, lies a blind daughter, compelled to eat the bread of affliction from the hard earning of an imprisoned father! Paternal affection binds her to his heart, and filial gratitude has long made her the daily companion of his captivity. No other solace remains to him, save the mournful one arising from the occasional visits of five other distressed children, and an affectionate wife, whom pinching want and grief have worn down to the gate of death. More than ten summers’ suns have rolled over the stone-roofed mansion of his misery, whose reviving rays have never once penetrated his sad abode. ‘ Seasons return,’ but not to him returns the cheering light of day, the smiling bloom of spring, or sound of human joy! Unfortunate captive! What is his guilt, what his crimes? Is he a traitor, or a parricide? A lewd adulterer, or a vile incendiary? No,—he is a *christian sufferer*! Under all his calamities, peace reigns in his breast, heavenly hope glistens in his eye, and patience sits throned on his pallid cheek.

He is none other than honest JOHN BUNYAN, languishing through the twelfth year of his imprisonment in Bedford Jail, for teaching plain country people the knowledge of the scriptures, and the practice of virtue!!! It requires the energy of Fox, the eloquence of Burke, and the pathos of Sheridan, to paint the effect of such a scene on the feelings of humanity: my feeble pen drops from the task, and leaves sensibility to endure those emotions of compassion and sorrow which it fails to describe.

" Such, however, were the scenes which actually took place in this land of liberty in the last century; and if they have not been repeated in the present, it is not because the sanguinary statutes which were the cause of them are repealed, but owing to the milder genius of the present government, and the liberal spirit of the times, which have suspended their execution. Why should not the same causes operate further to their repeal?"

These generous sentiments will, at the same time, exhibit the mould in which our friend's mind was cast, and the active part he took in the public measures of the day.

After thus vigorously defending the outworks of religion, the next year, (1792,) Mr. Parry found occasion to summon up his powers in the defence of the citadel itself. The celebrated Gilbert Wakefield having thought proper to publish a pamphlet with a view to overthrow the universal practice of public and social worship among christians, and to confine their meetings to instruction, discussion, and disputation; professing to establish his point by the precepts and example of Christ and his Apostles, as well as by the expediency of the abolition, Mr. Parry meets his learned antagonist on these grounds, and, as must be admitted, by every im-

partial observer, fairly and triumphantly overthrows every argument by which the sacred cause of public devotion was assailed. The learned author of the *Silva Critica* most evidently appears to have mistaken the application of his talents, in starting this novel controversy; while our friend shines as an orb of no ordinary magnitude, in illustrating, by resistless argument, the inspired page, and proving, with an acuteness, and moderation, and solidity, all his own, the utter fallacy of his opponent's reasoning, and demonstrating the hollowness and inconsistency of all his assertions.

After about three years from the period of this publication, Mr. Parry proceeded, with an even course, in the duties of his sacred office; till at length, in the year 1795, he received a severe shock as a minister and pastor, by the emigration of not less than twenty of his most intimate and valued friends to America. To a man of Mr. Parry's sensibility, this event was peculiarly gloomy and depressing. From this hour, Little Baddow lost many of its charms to him; and by the declining state of the congregation, after the emigration of its chief supporters, a cloud seemed to lower over his prospects there. But the ways of God are in the deep, " his footsteps are not known." " All things were" silently " working together for good." This occurrence, together with the publication of an important tract, on the inspiration of the New Testament, prepared the way for his removal to a higher and more important situation in the church of God, which he filled with honour, to the end of life.

The tract referred to, appeared in the year 1797, and was intitled, " An Inquiry into the Nature and Extent of the Inspiration of the Apostles, and other Writers of the New Testament;

conducted with a View to some late Opinions on the Subject." It was written, though not professedly, yet, according to the acknowledgment of the author to the compiler of this memoir, really, with a view to answer the five letters on the same subject, by the celebrated Le Clerc. The principles of that very insidious and sophistical production being in unison with those of modern Socinians, Mr. Parry thought he was doing a service to the cause of revealed religion, by endeavouring to ascertain and fix the true basis on which the doctrine of divine inspiration rests. To every lover of truth and good sense, Mr. Parry's Inquiry will be esteemed a treasure. It is thus referred to by Dr. J. P. Smith, in his recent work on the person of Christ: "The great principle of a complete inspiration of the Apostles, in every thing which they delivered as a part of the scheme of christianity, has been established by abundant proofs. It has particularly been done in a luminous, concise, and most convincing manner, by the Rev. W. Parry, the respected and able theological tutor of the academy at Wymondley, in his Inquiry," &c. Le Clerc's object was to disprove what is commonly called the plenary inspiration of scripture: not merely that which would comprehend the very words and syllables, but also some of the religious doctrines of revelation; and by laying hold of a few seeming discrepancies in the sacred history, and some instances, wherein he thinks the apostles in their conduct could not be under the influence of the Holy Ghost, as when Paul answered the high priest, "God shall smite thee, thou whitewashed wall," he urges, with some plausibility, that the sacred writers were left entirely to themselves, except when any prophetical com-

munication or miraculous power was concerned. Hence he infers, that when the Apostle Paul speaks of the corruption of the whole human race by the fall of Adam, of the necessity of becoming new creatures, in order to be true christians, &c. &c. he is to be considered as only speaking his own private opinion, which we are at liberty to judge of, and, if we please, reject. Mr. Parry, in his Inquiry, closes at once on his antagonist, and grapples with him on the very principle of divine inspiration; and, in the most satisfactory manner, demonstrates, from internal evidence, that there is that kind of inspiration in the sacred records which warrants us to receive their testimony on every point of doctrine and practice with implicit deference and veneration, as the truth of God. We cannot forbear making a short extract from the Inquiry, as a specimen of the work, wishing, at the same time, that this little tract were in the hands of every one desirous of possessing a powerful antidote to the subtle poison of socinianism.

"Another advantage attending the above view of the apostolic inspiration is, that it will enable us to understand some things in their writings, which it might be difficult to reconcile with another view of the subject. If the inspiration and guidance of the Spirit, respecting the writers of the New Testament, extended only to what appears to be its proper province, matters of a religious and moral nature, then there is no necessity to ask, whether *every thing* contained in their writings were suggested immediately by the Spirit or not: whether Luke were inspired to say, that the ship in which he sailed with Paul, was wrecked on the Island of Melita: * or whether Paul were

* Acts xxviii. 1.

under the guidance of the Spirit, in directing Timothy to bring with him the cloak which he left at Troas, and the books, but especially the parchments ;* for the answer is obvious, these were not things of a religious nature, and no inspiration was necessary concerning them. The inspired writers sometimes mention common occurrences, or things in an incidental manner, as any other plain and faithful men might do. Although, therefore, such things may be found in parts of the evangelic history, or in epistles addressed to churches or individuals, and may stand connected with important declarations concerning christian doctrine or duty, yet it is not necessary to suppose, that they were under any *supernatural* influence in mentioning such common or civil affairs, though they were, as to all the sentiments they inculcated respecting religion.

" This view of the subject will also readily enable a plain christian, in reading his New Testament, to distinguish what he is to consider as *inspired truth*. Every thing which the Apostles have written or taught concerning christianity ; every thing which teaches him a religious sentiment, or a branch of duty, he must consider as *divinely true* ; as the mind and will of God, recorded under the direction and guidance of his Spirit. It is not necessary that he should inquire, whether what the Apostles taught be *true*. All that he has to search after is, their *meaning* ; and when he understands what they *meant*, he may rest assured, that meaning is consistent with the will of God, is *divine infallible truth*. The testimony of men who speak and wrote by the Spirit of God, is the testimony of God himself ; and the testimony of the God of

truth is the strongest and most *indubitable* of all demonstration."

The production of such a tract as the *Inquiry*, was calculated to impress the minds of the religious public with great respect for the talents and dispositions of the author ; and, together with a character in other respects exceedingly estimable, seemed to point him out as a very suitable person into whose hands the superintendance of the Daventry Academy might, with safety and advantage, be placed. A successor to Doddridge was wanted ; one who, under the divine blessing, would restore the former glory which had now departed ; one who would conscientiously endeavour to fulfil the pious and benevolent intention of the founder of that Institution. In the person of the Rev. Mr. Parry, the trustees of the late W. Coward, Esq. of Walthamstow, found such a man, whose name, we doubt not, will be associated in history, not only with " the excellent of the earth," but among the chief " masters in Israel." From the defection of the Rev. T. Belsham, who had been eight years tutor at Daventry, and the infection of the academy with that destructive *virus*, which poisons vital religion at its source, the trustees thought proper it should be dissolved, and undergo a lustration of one year, previous to its re-establishment. The spot fixed upon for the renovated academy, was at the village of Wyndley in Hertfordshire, in the vicinity of the towns of Stevenage and Hitchin. The pleasant distance from the metropolis, the rural scenery, the eligibility of the premises, all united in determining the choice to this spot. To a man of Mr. Parry's turn of mind, and previous attainments, the proposal to become the head of such an establishment came

* 2 Tim. iv. 13.

with peculiar attractions. It became with him a question of solemn duty; and in deciding to accept the proposal before him, from his known integrity, no one ever imputed to him any motive but that of honest zeal in his blessed master's service, and a hope that, under the divine blessing, he might become more extensively useful to the church of God. Such was his own declaration, in the last days of his life, when reviewing the way wherein the Lord had led him. The following letter, addressed by Mr. Parry to the associated ministers of Essex, with whom he had taken sweet counsel many years, on his leaving the county, to enter on his new duties at Wymondley, will show with what views and feelings he entered on his important charge; and with this we must conclude the second part of our memoir:—

To the Associated Protestant Dissenting Ministers in the County of Essex.

“ Brethren;

“ The providence of God having removed me out of your country, and called me, as I trust, to engage in a work more important, as well as more arduous, than that in which I was engaged while resident among you, I wish to embrace the opportunity of your next meeting, to take a respectful and affectionate leave of a body with whom I esteem it an honour, as well as a pleasure, to have been so long associated.

“ United in our views of that important gospel truth, which is the firm foundation of our hope, and the animating principle of our obedience, I look back with satisfaction to many pleasing interviews I have had with you, and the benefit, I trust, I have derived from my intercourse and fellowship with you. Accept my earnest and affectionate wishes for your growing union, stability, and comfort, in your associated

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capacity, and in your several connexions with the churches and congregations under your charge. May the all-wise and gracious Head of the church prosper, guide, and keep you continually by his grace and spirit, and succeed all your efforts to promote his kingdom, and win souls to him. In taking this leave of you as an association, permit me, brethren, earnestly to request your united and individual intercessions at the throne of grace, that, through the continued supplies of the grace and spirit of Christ, I may be enabled *faithfully* and *successfully* to discharge the duties of the very important office in which I am engaged. I need not observe to *you*, that numerous are the labours and difficulties inseparable from it. I trust, therefore, that all my christian friends will give me an interest in their prayers, that, in this arduous undertaking, I may have all that wisdom and grace I shall so peculiarly need; and may be the instrument of training up many who shall labour zealously and successfully for the cause, the truth, and the glory of a blessed Redeemer, when our heads are laid in the dust.

“ In view of that approaching period, may we all, in our several situations, be quickened to work while it is day, and when the season of our earthly labours is ended, may we at last meet in that happy world, where painful separations will be unknown, where good men will be associated for eternity, and where the stamp of immortality will be impressed on the pleasing intercourse and pure pleasures of religious friendship. This is the earnest prayer of, brethren,

Your sincere and affectionate friend and brother in the gospel,
W. PARRY,
Wymondley House, Sept. 13, 1799.

(To be continued.)

SHORT DISCOURSES FOR FAMILIES, &c.

No. XVIII.

THE INSUFFICIENCY OF A MERE
PROFESSION OF RELIGION.

"Hearers only." James i. 22.

IT is a thought which demands the most serious attention from both old and young, that there is no possibility of remaining mere spectators either of the joys or sorrows of the eternal world. No man can continue an unoccupied and uninterested observer of the glories of God's presence, or of the miseries of that state which awaits the wicked. All take their share, and become participants, either in the felicity which the grace of God has provided for them that fear him, or in that bitterness of his wrath, which will be poured out for ever on the ungodly. And is it not right that it should be so? Are we not all members now of a grand moral system, in which we take our station, and act our part? And do not all things within us and without us correspond with the dictates of inspiration; "every one shall receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad?" We are not mere lookers-on, even in the concerns and engagements of this life. According to our station and our calling, we take our share, more or less, in the busy concerns of time; we experience its trials; we all suffer its afflictions and sorrows, and participate in its gratifications. We all now live as men in a world of men; and we live so now, preparatory to a state less fluctuating and fugitive, where we shall live as immortals in a world of immortals.

But let it be further impressed upon our minds, that we have not done with the deeds of this life,

when the day is passed by in which we have performed them. They must all live again, and live for ever, in their results upon human character, and in their influence upon our everlasting destiny. How often, at a very distant day, do we meet the consequences either of our wisdom or our folly! This is very impressively true in relation to our misconduct. A single action may meet us again with all its accumulated effects, long after it has faded from the memory; and afflict us with a most mortifying and tormenting sense of the folly or the depravity which prompted its performance. And when once a wrong action is performed, no man can tell where it will end, or when it may be said to have produced its final result. The present life, therefore, is viewed in its true importance, only when it is considered as an introductory state of action; that short day of human exertion, which is to leave a fixed and permanent impression upon our eternal state; which is, indeed, the little stream destined to swell into a mighty ocean of unfathomable and unmeasurable results; which is to give, I will not say a colouring, or an impregnation to eternity, but absolutely to constitute it life or death, happiness or misery, to every human intelligence. And when it is considered that the preaching of the gospel is the grand instrumentality which God has been pleased to appoint for the salvation of the souls of men from guilt and impurity, we may be sure that the consequences, both to those who receive and those who reject it, are not terminated when the present life ends. It is a most solemn truth, that this gospel, heard so listlessly by some, rejected so

contumaciously by others, is to all and each "a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death." And among all the results of human actions, there are none that will appear, at the day of God, so awfully magnificent, as those which have flowed, and which through eternity must continue to flow, from the kind of treatment the gospel is now receiving at our hands. Truly awful, therefore, must be the state of those whose character answers to the words of this text,—"Hearers only."

I. Our first effort will be to show from these words, that the claims of the gospel of Christ cannot be satisfied by *a mere hearing*. To effectuate this purpose, perhaps the most direct and convincing method will be, to refer you briefly to the nature of the gospel itself, and to a review of its designed influence on the heart and character of its subjects.

1. The gospel is a revelation of the divine mercy, in an extended display of real, active benevolence, aiming at the supreme and everlasting happiness of mankind, by the effect which such an exhibition is calculated to have on the human character. It represents God, in the plenitude of his love, as actually giving his own Son to redeem our souls; it represents the Son of God as undertaking, in compliance with the Father's counsels, to perform an arduous service by which God had determined to preserve his character unimpeachable, and his law inflexible in its denunciations, and yet to extend the richest fruits of his mercy and love to his sinful creatures. And can you suppose it enough, to give this most mysterious, most sublime, and most glorious report *a mere hearing*? Are such glad tidings to produce no effect; to be listened to as an uninteresting tale, as circumstances in which nothing of ours is involved? It is only in the cordial

faith of the humble, grateful listener to such tidings, that they meet a reception worthy of their nature, answerable to their claims upon the human heart, and adequate to the intentions and commands of that gracious Being, in whose name they are published. The report of the gospel is the faithful testimony of God, "worthy of all acceptation;" and wherever, and to whomsoever it is preached, the voice of its great Author is heard, addressing each in that pointed and weighty inquiry, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

2. The gospel is a system of divine but yet rational means, directed to the conviction of the understanding, and the renovation of the heart;—and is it enough to be hearers only? We are by nature alienated from God. We call sweet bitter, and bitter sweet; light darkness, and darkness light. The gospel presents those views of God's purity, of the evil of sin, and the loathsomeness of the sinner in God's sight, which to be duly received, will produce repentance,—not a mere sense of grief, for the personal consequence of sin, but a thorough change of heart and mind. These principles, brought with divine power to the conscience, are the seed of a new life; an energy from above which will create all things new. And can any one think that he has met the wishes of the divine founder of the gospel, if he gives a mere hearing to the truth? What end indeed could God have had in view by the mere ostentatious display of truth without influence, and sentiments destitute of all bearing on the moral relations or future interests of man? Has he represented his love, his patience, his pity, as principles, or rather perfections, of infinite energy in his nature, and drawn all these out in the impressive

and speaking forms of a sympathizing friend and brother, an obeying surety, a redeeming substitute, a suppliant intercessor, only to fill our ears with strange tidings, or to receive in return an insensibility like that which possessed the hearts of the Jews, while the very rocks which surrounded them were rent asunder? Then had these murderous Jews themselves been the most pious of men, for they were "hearers only." Or can you look on him whom you have pierced with the smart of ten thousand aggravated crimes, and not mourn for him? Can you stand and listen to his words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," and not believe on him as your surety? Can you gaze on Calvary, while the sacred record assists your imagination to realize the scene, and remain *gazers* only? Can you hear it said, "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," and remain a hearer only? If you do, yet you must confess that this is not all that such scenes and such sentiments were intended to effect: you must feel and own, that such a result could neither be answerable to the design of the mighty sufferer, nor adequate, even in the estimation of the most sober reason, to the moral dignity and energy, the irresistible tenderness and holy suasion of facts so significant, and sentiments so truly divine.

3. I contemplate the gospel in its personal relations as a system of duties to engage all the active energies of our nature in one uniform, universal, and unceasing effort to please and glorify God;—and can its character be understood, or its claims felt by those who are hearers only? The gospel is not exclusively a revelation to be received with faith: but faith is wrought that it may *work*, and work too by the noblest and most efficient

of all active principles, *love*. Hence it is said, "every one that *heareth* these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand," &c. Matthew vii. 26, &c. "Then are ye my disciples, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." It is a very favourite method with many to represent the gospel as a system of gracious blessings conferred, or published, leaving out of their account the obligation and duty of those to whom these things are published, and forgetting or concealing, that if any be a hearer of the word (*of grace*) and not a doer of the work, "which even grace requires, "this man's religion is vain." It is not enough to say generally the gospel regenerates, and it will inevitably produce holy obedience, and so take the effect for granted, or see it and seek it only in its cause; the plain fact is the word of grace prescribes the very duties to be performed, one by one, authorizing us to admit no testimony but that which the *fruit* bears to the nature of the tree; and solemnly enjoining us to disclaim all who *do not the works*; and assuring us that no cause of congratulation exists in the mere hearing and knowing for their own sakes, but that "if we *know* these things, happy are we, if we *do* them."

4. We may view the gospel as a system of hopes and promises to be embraced and cherished in the heart, as the dearest inheritance of immortal man, the richest gift of our Father's love. The hopes of a full and free forgiveness of every transgression; the hope of a gradual, but at last, perfect triumph over the evil principles of our nature; the hope of admission to the blissful presence of the Father of lights, the

Saviour of the world, and the Spirit of grace; the hope of an ever augmenting and brightening vision of "that which eye has not seen, nor ear heard;"—these are the sublime objects which the gospel of Jesus promises to all that believe. And are these assurances, made by the oracle of the living God, to be merely heard? Can you be content with being a mere hearer of them now, unambitious of possessing them hereafter? Are not these the hopes which no revolutions of time can endanger, and no severity of affliction destroy? Are not these the portion, which, though we brought it not into the world with us, may be taken out of the world by us, and continue infinitely more than all the world to us, when the world and all that appertains to it shall be worthless? Then what can equal the infatuation of those frail sons of men, who hear incessantly of the uncertain tenure by which they hold their present joys, and as incessantly of the inviolable covenant and oath of God, by which he has conferred a better life and better world on those that hope in his mercy, content that he should promise what they are not emulous of enjoying, and willing to hear only of that unmeasured and unmeasurable good, which, before it can be possessed, must engross all the confidence, and fill all the hopes of the heart?—It is now proposed to consider,

II. Who are the persons that come within the description of the text, satisfying themselves, and attempting to satisfy the author of the gospel by giving it a mere hearing.

1. He remains a *hearer only* who has not cordially embraced the full and blissful message of the Father's love and the Son's grace, or who has not believed to the salvation of his soul. I refer particularly to the case of those

who are not yet well content to relinquish the doings and the merits of their own righteousness, to be justified freely by grace, through the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. How can he be counted any thing more than a mere hearer, in whom all the hearing he has so long enjoyed has not produced faith? "Faith cometh by hearing," but if you have not *faith*, you have not taken one step, nor advanced one degree beyond the character of the text, "hearers only." If you have not found that justifying righteousness, that heavenly peace, which the Saviour came to give, and which he still lives to bestow, then, as to all the great and vital purposes of the gospel, you are "hearers only."

2. Those remain hearers only, who, whatever they may profess, have not been turned by the gospel from the ways of sin; but are still living according to the course of this world.—What good has that young man derived from the gospel of Jesus, though he reads it each sabbath-day, when every day of the week is given up to worldly gratifications, and to the eager pursuits of a world which lieth in the wicked one? He is just as little affected by the realities of eternity, as those who never heard of them, and just as eager after the sensual gratifications of time, as those who never felt the impulse of a nobler object, and never entertained a higher aim. All is still darkness, though he has heard of the light; all is still death within the soul, though he has heard of "the way, the truth, and the life." He is still a hearer only. And so it might be said, not only of the vain young man, but of many an aged professor, whose habits have extended only to the outward hearing of the truth, but "whose inward part is full of wickedness." Of all such let me ask, why are

you yet grasping at the fleeting shadow of sinful pleasures, and giving to the everlasting felicities of heaven but the hearing of the ear? Sin has your heart, your affections, the active energies of your nature, and yet its pleasures are only for a season, while the blessings of God's salvation, though infinite and for ever, sink upon your ear like the report of an every day's tale, or like the dying fall of a feeble and distant echo.

3. He is a hearer only, who, whatever be his integrity and morality in common life, however great his benevolence to the distressed and wretched of his fellow men, and however exemplary his temper and disposition, is still destitute of spirituality of mind, and a stranger to delight in God. If such a man is at the head of a family, it may be orderly, but it is not religious. There may be nothing in his mode of conducting business, or in the ordinary duties of life, to distinguish such a man from the real christian, but still there is an immense difference. He may hear, but he does not feel or enjoy the gospel. There is a living and a life giving power in true godliness, which is as distinct from mere morality, as the living body is from a dead one. It may have its shape and its whole semblance and its every

limb, but it is dead. Many such there are in the christian church, who may possess much of the outward semblance of christianity, of whom, after all, it is strictly true, they are hearers only, and have never yet sought the quickening energy of the Divine Spirit upon their hearts. Now, some have gone on for many years in this state, and seem ambitious of no higher an attainment. Well, suppose you go on so still—to the end of life, and *die hearers only*, will that save you? No; you might as well never have heard, as to be hearers only; and you had better never heard of this way of righteousness, than be found at last in a different road: for he who has been lifted up to heaven, will be cast down to hell. We know not how near we stand to the eternal world, and when the summons comes, we shall not be hearers only; we must obey. When we stand at the bar of God, we shall not be hearers only. And now, therefore, while death and judgment, and heaven and hell, are all both near and certain, let us not be hearers only;—and, above all, while the testimony of Jesus's dying love, while the renewing energy of his grace, and the glowing promises of his immortal kingdom are preached, let us not remain "hearers only."

ORIGINAL ESSAYS, COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

To the Editors.

ON PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

DEEPLY interested as a Protestant Dissenter in the cause of religious liberty, and as a Congregationalist in the prevalence of that particular mode of church government which your work is intended to advocate, I cannot but congratulate the Independent denomination

on the successful progress of your labours. Your pages have afforded satisfactory proof, that truth may be defended with firmness apart from violence, and with moderation in which there is no servility. It would be romantic to indulge the hope of rapidly gaining converts to a cause which has only simplicity and truth to recommend it; in opposition to the rooted

prejudices of ages, and the force of secular interest. But it is an important object gained, if we can silence the hostility, or neutralize the scorn of our adversaries, by affording evidence to the world, too convincing to be refuted, that it is possible to be separatists without being schismatics; and that to dissent from the Church of England, or the Church of Rome, is perfectly compatible with the profoundest reverence for the Church of God.

But, to plead the cause of religious liberty, is only a secondary object with you, an object subordinate to the promotion of knowledge, of virtue, and of practical and experimental piety in our churches. If, indeed, our principles as Independents have any value, if they are worth defending, it is not only because they are scriptural, but for the sake of their practical tendencies. Nor should I witness with regret the termination of your labours, if your work, instead of maintaining the high character of a *Christian Instructor*, should degenerate into the mere organ of party-faction and theological cabal. If we are anxious to hold the truth, let us remember to hold it in love. If we struggle to maintain unimpaired and untrammelled our holy liberties, let it be, that with more unintermittent ardour, more unconstrained devotion, more undeviating uniformity, we may become followers of God as dear children. If I am correct in these sentiments, I trust you will not refuse to give publicity to the following animadversions. They relate to a matter deeply involving the interests of true religion, as well as the dignified consistency of its professors: or, if you object to the manner in which the subject is brought forward, let me intreat you to substitute a discussion of the point better digested and more powerfully enforced.

* The subject, to which I am desirous of inviting the attention of your numerous readers, is the conformity of the professors of religion to such pleasures and amusements of the world as are not of good report among serious persons. It is notorious that not only in the metropolis, but that also in our provincial cities and larger towns, there are many connected with religious societies, if not members of christian churches, who are in the habit occasionally, or frequently, of mingling in the fashionable recreations of the age, cards, dancing, mixed and numerous assemblies, and even theatrical exhibitions. They are commonly to be found among the higher classes of tradesmen, or they are manufacturers, and merchants rising to opulence by successful commerce; and throwing aside their habits of self-denial, of abstinence, and of wise and holy superiority to the world, just in proportion to their increasing wealth, they afford a humiliating proof of the dangerous power of prosperity, and a lamentable forgetfulness of the impossibility of serving God and Mammon. They dissent from the Church of England, but they conform to the world. They are advocates of religious liberty, but betrayers of religion; and by their conduct they do all that they can to undermine those great principles of practical godliness, for the support and dissemination of which, I conceive, religious liberty is chiefly imparted. In short, a man of serious and philosophic mind, who looks beyond the surface of things, is compelled to draw the inference, an inference discreditable alike to their understandings and their hearts, that they continue Dissenters, not from motives of piety, but from the love of freedom, not from conscientious scruples, but from educational habits: not to

demonstrate their submission to the will of God, but to express their reprobation of the control of man; such conduct is dishonourable to themselves, dangerous to their families, and seriously injurious to the interests of religion. For my own part, to say nothing of the impiety too glaring to be disguised in such conduct, I know of nothing more truly mean and contemptible than the inconsistency of persons who affect to be christians, while, in point of fact, their religion is so far from being exclusively that of our blessed Redeemer, that it is altogether destitute of christian simplicity, and no other than a grotesque combination of *all* religions. It is a motley religion borrowing from all, agreeing with none. With PAGANISM, they have a multitude of gods, idolizing wealth, splendour, amusements, plays, every object that can divert the fancy, or kindle the passions. From JUDAISM, they learn to regard with settled aversion truly good and pious christians, and to deride or condemn the spirit of devotion. MAHOMETANISM furnishes them with a paradise of voluptuous excitements; and with the followers of the Arab Prophet, they make true blessedness to consist in terrestrial pleasures. And, finally, CHRISTIANITY provides them only with their *baptism* and their *name*; while they regard a practical and spiritual uniformity to its creed as needless for any but the poor, the miserable, and the dying. Where is their reverence for the religion and the God of the Bible: when, instead of devoting their prosperity to the moral and intellectual improvement of their fellow-creatures, they are living to a considerable extent in a practical neglect of the great christian charities, and teaching their children to value themselves, *at on* the good their property

enables them to effect, but on the connexions to which it introduces, and the appearance it qualifies them to make.

The danger which menaces their families is not less obvious than the dishonour they bring on themselves. If they take their children to the prayer-meeting, or the lecture, one evening, and the next send them to the assembly-room, or the theatre, where the greater portion of the night is spent in amusements whose professed object is *excitement*, what must be the consequence of such irreconcileable inconsistency?—Must not young persons of either sex, thus introduced into life, draw the most fatal conclusions? Must they not infer either that the guardians of their youth, whose office it is to form their principles, and guide their manners, do not believe the truths of religion; or that they hold it of little importance as a mere abstract speculation; or that they suppose it compatible with the pleasures and varieties which distinguish the men and women of the world. Must not habits of pleasure, so long as they are persisted in, preclude the possibility of forming in the young habits of devotion, and even of retired and manly amusement, such as can be found only in the sobriety of intellectual pursuits? If two or three evenings out of the seven are passed in gay and crowded assemblies, thus necessarily absorbing the hours of religious retirement, and calling into play passions irreconcileable with calm and elevated communion with God, is it probable that the intervals of abstinence and of domestic tranquillity will be devoted to nobler occupations; or will not those intervals bring with them a feverish restlessness, till the hour of amusement returns, and the excitement is repeated which dispels the *ennui* of common life? In proportion to the pleasure ex-

perienced by our youth in scenes of frivolity and dissipation, will not the offices of religion become distasteful unless they go to hear a fashionable preacher as they would frequent a theatre? And is it not to be dreaded, that the younger branches of religious families, introduced to the promiscuous society of persons without principle, or of bad principle, will incur imminent hazard of having their minds contaminated, their feelings vitiated, their characters demoralized by the impure contact? Will they not in many instances form such connexions as a pious parent would tremble to sanction, though they might promise secular advantages of wealth and rank of the most alluring kind? I have lived long enough to see all these effects, and to lament them deeply in the families of my deluded neighbours and friends. I have seen the sons and daughters of such professors a dishonour to their name, monsters of impiety, despicable at first for their frivolousness, and afterwards abominable for their vices. They have added to the bold impiety of avowed irreligionists, the bitter malignity of apostates; and have avenged themselves for the honour which their pious progenitors did to religion, by casting upon it a double portion of insult. I do not say it is always or often so. But no thanks to their unwise parents if it is otherwise.

To the considerations already stated, let us not forget the injury done to the cause of religion: habits of pleasure, and an unlimited intercourse with the people of the world in their hours of gaiety, destroy ultimately the last vestige of family religion, the altar is desecrated, and the blessing of heaven is withdrawn. And does it not appear to follow of necessity that in such a process one or two generations at most will suffice to remove the descendants of pious

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families from the christian assembly in which their fathers worshipped, which they supported by their contributions, or honoured by their virtues; and will they not be found in the socinian meeting-house, the parish church, or among the apostates from religion and from God, who make infidelity their refuge from the lashes of conscience, their plea for the perpetration of crime? It has been tauntingly said, that opulent dissenters do not hold their sentiments as strict religionists, through more than three generations. The first in the series are perhaps *members* of a christian church, their children are *hearers* but not members, and their grandchildren *neither one nor the other*. They go off into the world never to return again, but, having plunged into fashionable pursuits, embrace also a fashionable religion, or openly avow that they have none. Let christian parents hesitate, and think, and tremble, before they thus open the flood-gates of apostacy upon their children's children. Let them calculate with wisdom and seriousness before they proceed to compromise the religious interests of their offspring in a base and antichristian attempt to form for them secular connexions, or to inspire them with a taste for dissipated pleasures. Let them remember the doctrine of consequences. Is it nothing to give offence to christians; nothing to bring an evil report on themselves; nothing to violate the vows by which they once consecrated their children to Jesus Christ; nothing that in a few generations their family name will cease to have a place in the records of the church of God? With regard to domestic discipline, I cannot but think the Society of Friends has afforded to other denominations of dissenters a most happy and honourable example. There is a grave and dig-

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nified consistency in the restraint laid upon themselves and their children, in the simplicity of their manners, and in their abstinence from the contagious atmosphere of public and fashionable life: let us not be deterred by their formality from imitating their virtues: nay, if there is no other guard for our consistency and our virtue, let us not shrink from the broad brim and the russet garb. The hour is not far distant when no man will regret that he has tasted but few of the vanities of life, nor rejoice that he has rioted in many. And if christian parents would fulfil the great obligations they owe to their children, they must instil into their minds those principles, in the day of health and of prosperity, which they will deem of paramount importance when extended upon the bed of death.

I am gentlemen, Yours, &c.

HORACE BENTLEY.

P. S. I am not ignorant of the mode of defence usually employed by the advocates of such amusements as are in discredit with serious people.—Nor do I think it matter of difficulty to detect the weakness or unravel the sophistry of their arguments.—With respect to dancing for instance, we are reminded of the scriptural precedent of David, who danced before the ark of God, the classical authority of Homer, who pronounced it a divine science, and the example of all the nations of antiquity. Some of which, such as Sparta, deemed it of so much publick moment, as to enforce it upon the citizens by legal enactment, while others incorporated this divine science into the worship of the gods. By what authority the loose maxims of pagan moralists, or the impure rights of pagan worship, are to be adduced as examples to those who have the Bible in their hands, and the cross of Jesus Christ for the ensign of their profession, I have yet to learn. Nor is it more easy to discover what analogy there is between the conduct of David, who, under the obscurity of a mystic dispensation, and in a moment of devout enthusiasm, danced at a religious procession, and that of those persons who frequent our modern assemblies, in which the night is devoted to pleasure, a gregarious mass of both sexes is collected together, and every arrangement is

purposely made to drown reflection, to dazzle the imagination, and to awaken the passions. If indeed no more is intended to be inferred from the example of the pious monarch, than that the act of dancing has in itself nothing criminal, that it is an indifferent act, having no moral character, this will be most readily allowed. It would be worse than puerile to contest the point. The child who gambols in the nursery or the garden, and in the buoyancy of his spirit dances to give full exercise to his limbs, is doubtless innocently employed. But when it has been conceded, that the mere act of dancing, being only a particular manner of moving the limbs, and exercising the muscular powers, is innocent, let not the conclusion be hastily drawn that it is equally innocent when it forms part of a system of dissipating pleasures, of intoxicating and demoralizing amusements; when it is made the pretext for assembling together the gay and thoughtless of both sexes and all ages, who reciprocally destroy each other's time, subvert each other's principles, and prepare each other to regard with disgust or weariness the momentous duties of religion, and the necessary engagements of common life. It is not to music, it is not to dancing, it is not to every particular, not simply considered, and apart from its artificial associations, or its moral tendencies, that the objection is made. It is to the influence of public amusements upon the mind, the heart, the calm pursuits of domestic life, and the higher obligations of religion. It is to this I appeal in justification of my remarks. And if parents, therefore, do not wish to endanger the moral and eternal happiness of their children, they will hesitate before they give their sanction to any pursuit which has an obvious tendency to cherish a taste for such pleasures. Nor let them say, they are only the amusements of childhood; for the habits of youth are carried into after life, and often go down with us to the grave. The dancing girl will grow up into a dancing woman:—but “train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR
THE EARLY RELIGIOUS IN-
STRUCTION OF CHILDREN.

(Continued from page 282.)

THAT the tenor of scripture is in favour of the earliest attempts to communicate religious knowledge, may be shown from numerous

passages. A very few will suffice. The people of God's choice, under the old dispensation, appear to have been very particularly directed to this parental duty. Moses, addressing the children of Israel on the singular privileges by which they were distinguished, takes frequent occasion to impress upon them the most serious attention to the statutes and judgments which they had been taught, and lays upon each individual parent among them this solemn injunction,—“Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but *teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons.*” From his naming and providing for the instruction of *grand-children*, in particular, it is but natural to believe, that he intended this kind of tuition to take an early commencement. He enjoins it upon the parent to extend his solicitude to the latest of his descendants he might be permitted to see; thus securing to the children of every generation, from the duties of either the immediate parent, or of the grandfather, or of both, the precious patrimony of a religious education. From the passage now quoted, and from his frequent recurrence to the subject of early instruction, it is evident, that the legislator of Israel attached to it the first importance. Speaking still of the laws and commandments which he had given them from God, he says, “Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children; and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” But, perhaps, the most striking view of the importance attached, under the Mosaic dispensation, to parental duties, is presented to

us in that law which required the father and mother of a disobedient, stubborn, and incorrigible son, “to bring him out unto the elders of his city, and to the gate of his place,” there to make public denunciation of his character, and then to give him up to public execution. “And all the men of his city,” says the statute, “shall stone him with stones, that he die.” How cruel, how revolting, must such an obligation as this be to the heart of a parent! It seems to outrage all the kind and tender feelings of our nature; and to require of pious parents a barbarity from which heathens themselves recoil with horror. It must be understood, however, that no violence to natural affection is intended by this institution: the view of the legislator was wise and good: it was, obviously, to impress upon the parent, by the most solemn and awful obligations, the necessity of an early, constant, and conscientious attention to the religious instruction of his offspring. “What parent,” says a late spirited writer, “what parent, *foreseeing the consequences*, could refuse to watch over his son night and day? Who but would avail himself of all the softness and docility of childhood, of every method of insinuation and instruction, of all the power of a good example? In a word, who but would attempt every thing to rescue a child from this calamity? lest, great as the affliction might be of itself, it should be still increased by reflecting that the negligence of the father was the murder of the son. In such a case, citizens around, and conscience within, like thunder-claps redoubled, would reproach a parent; his ears and his heart would tingle with destruction upon destruction; “Thy ways and thy doings have procured these things unto thee. This is thy wicked-

ness,—it is bitter,—it reacheth unto thy heart!"

The manner, too, in which our Lord is described in the New Testament, as inviting and receiving little children, is favourable to the doctrine of *early* tuition. We are told that on one occasion, when some of the people brought him "little children,"* for the benefit of his blessing, they were rebuked by his disciples, who, imperfectly acquainted as yet with the mind of their Divine Master, and with the nature of his holy religion, sought to prevent what they conceived to be an unseasonable intrusion on his time and attention. But Jesus, much pleased with their narrow, repulsive conceptions, said unto them, "Suffer the little children † to come unto me, and forbid them not." He then took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. Our Lord is not said, indeed, to have addressed his discourse to these children, or to have attempted their immediate instruction. They were, no doubt, of too tender an age to admit of it. But his language and conduct, on this interesting occurrence, seem plainly enough to indicate, that the earliest opportunities should be embraced of informing the young mind in the things of religion. Young as these children were, they drew the gracious attention of the Saviour. They had their claims to religious solicitude not only owned, but eminently supported and vindicated by his authority; and surely we cannot be indifferent to them, without the guilt of opposing ourselves to his example and his admonition. That example and that admonition are both of a kind to sanction the parent, who

carefully avails himself of the first opening, indicated in the mind of his child, to pre-occupy it with divine truth. But, with the same force as they sanction him, they rebuke the delays of those who, either from indifference, or false principle, allow the immortal mind to waste a very important period, in all its native ignorance of God and the things he has revealed.*

* The anecdote of Dr. Beattie and his eldest son, as it bears upon this argument, is well known. It may occur to some as a successful example in favour of that delay which we are here reprobating. It is briefly this. The child had reached his fifth or sixth year, could read a little, but *had received no particular information with respect to the Author of his being*. In a corner of a little garden, the Doctor, without informing any one of the circumstance, wrote in the mould, with his finger, the three initial letters of his son's name; and, sowing garden-cresses in the furrows, covered up the seed, and smoothed the ground. Ten days after, the boy ran to his father, and told him, that his name was growing in the garden, and intreated him to go with him to look at it. "Yes," said the Doctor, on coming to the place, "I see it is so; but there is nothing in this worth notice; it is mere chance." The child was not content with this reply, declaring that he thought it must have been *designed* by somebody. "So you think," returned the Doctor, "that what appears so regular as the letters of your name cannot be by chance?" "Yes," said he, with firmness, "I think so." The father availed himself of the opportunity to show, that as chance could not produce so trifling an effect, it could not have produced himself, furnished as he was with various members so well adapted to their uses. The child was convinced of the justness of such a conclusion; and the Doctor, in telling the anecdote, observes, "I had now gained the point I aimed at, and saw, that his reason taught him, that what begins to be must have a cause; and that what is formed with regularity must have an intelligent cause. I, therefore, told him the name of the Great Being who made him and all the world; concerning whose adorable nature I gave him such information as I thought he could in some measure comprehend. The lesson affected him greatly, and he never forgot either it, or the circumstance that introduced it.

* Luke xviii. 15. Τὰ βρέφη, INFANTS, such as are yet nourished at the breast.

† Τὰ παιδία, very little children; dim. of Παις.

Another scriptural proof, to the same effect, remains to be noticed. The Apostle Paul, seeking to fortify Timothy against the deceptions of "evil men and seducers," exhorts him to steadfastness, as an anxious father would the son of his dearest hopes, and that on the ground of his very early acquaintance with his religion:—"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that, *from a*

We do not hesitate to say, that we consider the conduct of Dr. Beattie, in this instance, as by no means commendable. His son proved, indeed, an extraordinary youth, and sustained, during his short life, a highly amiable and virtuous character. But a christian parent will not easily approve of giving up the first *five or six* years of his child's life to the chance of an experiment. The interests of a rational and immortal mind are of too grave an import to justify it. If religious knowledge be at all necessary, and if it be the parent's duty to communicate it to his child, the uncertainty of human life renders him criminal in withholding it beyond a reasonable period. The intellect of young Beattie was of a class that admitted, that even invited, the earliest information on religious subjects; and long before he reached the age which prepared him, in his father's estimation, for what he terms a *moral or logical experiment*, he might have been enlightened with much important and useful instruction from the word of God. The Doctor certainly acted without a warrant, either for the time he required, or the *result* he wished. Besides, the manner in which he conducted the experiment for which he hazarded so much, is open to great censure. While his child was evidently under strong emotions of wonder and curiosity, on discovering his initials growing in the garden, the father practised deception upon him, and ascribed it to chance. This, it will be alleged, was intended, not to put the boy's inquiries to rest; but to excite his eagerness for a better solution. But how could the Doctor assure himself that his son would not implicitly receive the explanation he was pleased to give him. Children are apt to be perfectly satisfied with any reason, in cases of difficulty, which appear to have been adopted by their parents. "My father says so," is authority enough for a young child on any subject; and

child, * thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus." The language of the Apostle sufficiently establishes the fact, that Timothy had received a scriptural education at a *very early* period. It does more; it assures us of the opinion which the Apostle himself entertained of the practice for which we plead. By pressing the recollection of it upon Timothy, as an argument for a bold and determined perseverance in the faith which he had been taught, he ob-

had the little inquirer, in the present instance, believed, as most children in similar circumstances would have done, that his father spoke the truth, and that the phenomenon of the *growing initials* must be attributed to chance, the Doctor would have found himself in the mortifying dilemma of either leaving him to retain his erroneous and absurd opinion, or to confess that he had asserted a falsehood, and led him astray. But, even in the happier case, of his child's intellect resisting the absurdity offered him, it did not become him, as a christian parent, to let him see that *he could trifle with the truth*.

"Maxima debetur pueru reverentia.—
— Nec tu pueri contempneris annos,
Sed peccaturo obstat tibi filius infans."

We have the more particularly noticed this anecdote, because it is referred to with exultation by many pious persons, who have been induced to give it their unqualified approbation, evidently from the high respect they entertain for the name of Beattie, and from the consideration of his son's truly excellent character. The example, therefore, is likely to have its influence. It recommends a dangerous delay of religious education, and encourages the attempt to open it with a lecture on some natural phenomenon, rather than draw it immediately from the fountain of sacred truth.

We very highly respect the character of the late Dr. Beattie, both as a man and an author; but, like all mortals, he was liable to err; and against his errors, as against those of the greatest name, we wish at once to guard, and to be guarded.

* Αὐτὸς δέ οὐκείη, *FROM INFANCY*,—an hyperbole, intending to convey the idea of a religious instruction begun at the tenderest possible age.

viuously represents it as a valuable privilege, and gives to the instructors of his childhood the amplest commendation.

But our apologist alleges, that the early attempts we recommend may have an evil effect on the temper of the young mind; that its native cheerfulness and sweetness may be destroyed by the solemnity and gloom of a religious treatment. To this objection, a brief reply will be sufficient. It arises evidently from misconceptions. Either the matter of instruction to be communicated is viewed under a character which does not belong to it, or the effects of some faulty mode of communicating that instruction, are hastily assumed as the inevitable tendencies of any attempt to cultivate early religion. It is, however, most certain, that, as it regards the matter to be taught, nothing can be more foreign to its spirit, nothing more completely the reverse of its genuine results, than any thing unamiable in temper or manners. Whatever of a gloomy or sour description appears in the temper of young or old, is assuredly to be traced to any other source than that of religion. Its early application, so far from nourishing, will correct the natural evils of the mind and heart. Its influence is to extirpate every selfish principle, every unsocial feeling, and to replace them, with dispositions to cultivate and practise " whatsoever things are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report." Is it to give a gloomy or morose shading to the mind, to impart the knowledge of God, the creator and preserver of all things, " whose tender mercies are over all his works; who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing?" As well may we accuse the sun of diffusing darkness, and attribute the ice in

the rivers to the heat of his rays. Will any amiable feature of the character be distorted by an introduction to the most amiable of all beings, the Author of all that is grand and beautiful in nature, " who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not;" whose very prohibitions are cautions against personal injury; and whose moral government demonstrates, in all its parts, the most unbounded condescension and benevolence? Or can any treatment of childhood tend more directly to promote a sweetly affectionate and cheerful temper of mind, than the knowledge of the history and ministry of our blessed Lord, and of the gracious purpose for which he came?—The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the statutes of the Lord are right, *rejoicing* the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb."

But, after satisfying ourselves as to the intrinsic excellence of the *matter*, it is not to be denied, that much, very much, depends on the manner of administering it. Children are easily affected by appearances, and deeply so with whatever characterizes an instructor. The features of his countenance, the tones of his voice, the attitudes he assumes, have all a powerful effect on the young mind, especially at a very tender age. These are points, therefore, which it seriously concerns the superintendant of youth to study, that he may regulate them with success: and, in a subsequent paper, I shall, with your permission, offer to your readers some observations on the *manner* of imparting religious instruction to children.

J. B. L.

(To be continued.)

ON ADDRESSING SINNERS.

No. II.

To enter into all the arguments that might be adduced in support of *general invitations*, or to answer all the objections that have been advanced by those who contend that sinners ought not to be invited *at all*, would lead to a discussion too extensive for the limits of a periodical work, and be but a repetition of what has frequently been urged before.

The question at issue has been often stated in such a manner, as to lead many to suppose that they who invite sinners imagine some inherent efficacy in the means, or some inherent ability in the individuals addressed. That such opinions are maintained by some who employ the language of invitation, I will not presume to deny; that they are necessarily connected with the admission of the practice, is what ought to be, but never can be proved by our opponents. We allow that sinners are incapable of performing any spiritual action; that they are utterly helpless, with respect to the work of their salvation; and that, were their conversion dependent on the condition of their making a single preparatory effort that could tend to bring them nearer to God, they would be irrevocably and eternally undone. But we, at the same time, attribute this incapacity and helplessness entirely to themselves; we account it not so much their misfortune as their crime: and we hold as a fundamental article of our creed, that this moral and self-induced inability of man can by no means absolve him from the obligations to duty under which he lay from the first moment of his existence. We can only passingly advert to a principle so fully established in the sacred volume; while we observe that the requirements of God are

founded on the obligations of duty, irrespective of the ability or inability of man; and that to suppose them otherwise, would be to represent the will of God, of which they are the expression, as mutable; and his holiness, of which they are the transcript, as capable of degrees, and consequently imperfect.

But while his *requirements*, as to their great and characteristic principles, remain unaltered, his *provisions* have been adapted to the wants and circumstances of fallen man; and have, though in no essential particulars, varied in different ages, and among different nations of the world. And the grand, unchangeable *requirement* of submission to the will of God is applicable to all the varieties of dispensation, and of the *provisions* by which each dispensation was distinguished. When the Almighty addressed Adam in the language of command alone; when he spoke to the patriarchs, in promises as well as precepts; when he enjoined on the Jews a system of moral duties, and of ceremonial observances; and when he finally declared from heaven,—“This is my beloved Son, **HEAR YE HIM;**” though his *provisions*, the dispensations of his providence and mercy, so much varied; there was one unvarying *requirement* throughout, the obligation of which was universal, and demanded obedience to his precepts, acquiescence in his declarations, and, in a word, a complete subjugation of our will to the divine.

In this twofold character we may view the invitations of the gospel. We meet the objection of those who assert or insinuate that, in inviting sinners, we imply their possession of an inherent ability to perform spiritual actions, by considering invitations, in the first place, as *requirements*. They differ, indeed, in the terms

by which they are expressed, from what are generally denominated *commandments*, but their radical and pervading principle is the same. They are assertions of the authority of God to prescribe; and calls, affectionate calls, upon man to fulfil what is his duty, that is, to obey. Classifying general invitations under the denomination of requirements, in employing them, we are not to lower the tone, nor to circumscribe the extent of the requisition on account of man's inability to comply. While we, therefore, firmly believe that all, by nature, are "tied and bound with the chain of their iniquities," and "dead in trespasses and sins," we must call upon them in the name, and after the example of Jesus, to "repent,—to "follow him;" to come unto him, that they may have life; to believe upon him, that they may be saved. And, in addressing this requirement to the sinner, we are no more infringing on the doctrine of his utter helplessness, than God himself did, when he delivered a law that was "holy, just, and good;" to a nation that were unable to think a good thought, to speak a good word, or to perform a good action, but as they were enabled by his grace.

Again, we confute those objectors who assert, that in inviting sinners, we suppose some inherent efficacy in the means employed, by considering them, in the second place, as *provisions*; that is, as a part of the system of means which God has appointed for the salvation of men. We admit fully, that there is no inherent efficacy in them; but we consider the appointment of God as stamping them with efficacy, and ensuring to the proper, the dependent use of them, success. It will be unnecessary to cite passages to prove this appointment; such passages have

been frequently adduced, and when pressed home upon our opponents, have been sometimes rebutted with blasphemy. Let the addresses of Christ, his commission to his Apostles, and their subsequent discourses, be perused with seriousness and attention; let the glosses, the puns, the quibbles, and the outrageous invective, which have been employed in explaining them away, be candidly scrutinized, and we have no apprehension of the result.

It is vain and futile to urge the hackneyed objection, that "it can be of no avail to call upon *dead sinners* to *arise and repent*." Is it demanded, how we can hope that they who are utterly insensible to divine things will feel the force of our addresses, or comply with the invitations which we give? As well might it be asked, where was the propriety of Christ's commanding *Lazarus* to come forth, while he was yet a putrifying carcase? How could he have hoped that such a lump of rottenness would have heard his voice, or obeyed his mandate? Why not, at least, pursue the more *rational* method of quickening him first, and then telling him to arise and perform the other functions of a living man? To such inquiries we may reply, that Christ acted thus at the grave of *Lazarus*, in order to show, that the *wisdom* and the *reason* of man are *foolishness* with God; and with the self-same design, has he ordained a similar course to be pursued in the promulgation of his gospel through the world. Is it objected, that there was a quickening power in the very word of Christ; we reply, that the preaching of the cross is "the power of God unto salvation;" the invitations of the gospel are the means by which he has determined and promised to communicate life and salvation to those who believe; and though, like all other means

employed to accomplish spiritual effects, they are not of themselves adequate to produce so astonishing a result, yet they are rendered "mighty through God," and crowned by his blessing with success.

Those who, on such grounds, impugn the practice of inviting sinners, are inconsistent with themselves. They object, that sinners are unable of themselves to obey the invitations we proclaim; and that there is no efficacy inherent in the means employed. Yet they will address to saints, without a scruple, the language of advice, and sometimes of command. Now, do they believe that saints possess any power of obeying these injunctions, or of performing any spiritual duty enjoined, except as power is given them from on high? Or do they suppose, that the word of exhortation which they utter is of itself equal to effect the purpose for which it is designed? They will, if they speak truth, answer in the negative. Why, then, so inconsistent, as to urge against our practice, which they happen to disapprove, an objection that would equally militate against another which, notwithstanding, they adopt. Let them rather close their Bibles; omit altogether the use of means; and embrace a religion without prayer, without precepts, and without exhortations; a religion, that will allow them to live the life of devils, and after they have turned earth into a hell, will snatch them from a sink of debauchery and crime, to seat them in the abodes of holiness and everlasting joy. For, if their objection be admitted as valid, it will not only hinder us from calling upon others "to be holy," but will also overthrow all endeavours to cultivate holiness ourselves; and all prayers for increasing conformity to the image of our Saviour must be laid

aside as inadequate to the accomplishment of so desirable an object, and *therefore* to be omitted altogether.

The positions that have been laid down will suggest replies to some other objections that have been made. Those that profess to be founded on the doctrine of God's eternal decrees, might, perhaps, appear to require a more extended notice. I can only, at present, observe, that if God had intended his secret purposes to be a rule of conduct to his ministers, he would have furnished them with some infallible *criteria* for arriving at a knowledge of those purposes; he would have given them, for instance, some certain marks for detecting the most covered hypocrisy: for I appeal to the judgment of candour, which of the two is the more dangerous practice; addressing sinners as such, and calling upon some who are not elected, to *repent*, and *believe* the gospel; or addressing hypocrites as saints, and persuading them into a certainty that they are the elect of God. The system of preaching, that is *exclusively* directed to saints, is a system inevitably productive of the latter evil. It is a system calculated to flatter spiritual pride, and to lull men into self-deception. It is a system that has no feature of resemblance to him who was "the friend of publicans and sinners;" who "came not to *call the righteous*, but *sinners to repentance*;" and to seek and to save the lost. And allow me to mention one reason why I have troubled you twice upon this important subject. I feel myself liable to backslide; and see that it is possible to backslide so far, as to render it presumptuous for me to account myself, at the time, a christian; and for such a wretched backslider, I can discern nothing but a fearful looking for of wrath and fiery in-

indignation ; no encouragement whatever to return, but in the general and indiscriminate invitations of the gospel. To the gospel I come, not as a saint, but as a sinner ; and it would not be worthy of the name of the gospel, if it did not speak to me as such, even though of such I were the chief. On this account, I would reiterate my earnest intreaties to all the ministers of Christ, to stand forward more firmly than ever in the defence of this apostolic practice ; and to proclaim, with all boldness of utterance, and all meekness of wisdom, the full and the free invitations which our Divine Master has commanded us to employ, and which he has, in numberless instances, so signally blessed. And I would call upon them, as they desire to be found faithful to the high trust reposed in them, as they love and value the souls of their fellow-men, as they wish to be the decided followers of Jesus ;—I would call upon them to discountenance and to oppose, by the weapons of truth, and in the spirit of affection, a doctrine that is calculated to foster pharisaism, to engender spiritual pride, to cherish hypocrisy, and to drive backsliders and sinners to despair.

May 3, 1819. M. C. P.

ON THE BLOODY SWEAT OF
CHRIST.

To the Editors.

WHILE reading the sermon contained in the Congregational Magazine for April, "On the agony of Christ," it occurred to me that your readers might be confirmed in their belief of the extremity of our Redeemer's sufferings, as demonstrated by his sweating blood, were a few well authenticated instances of this most incredible attendant on extreme mental and bodily pain to be adduced.

I am aware that the original

words admit of no other translation than the one given in the English New Testament, and that Justin Martyr, Theophylactus, and others, think that the drops of blood did not pass through the perspiratory vessels of our Saviour's skin, but only numerous large drops of viscid perspiration resembling blood in size and consistence.

Probably many of your readers may be familiar with the history of the life of Alexander the Great, by Boistreau, who relates that when he perceived his troops give way in a battle fought in India, he was so violently enraged that he sweated blood copiously from every part of his body.

Florentinus Leudanus states (in his Martyrology) that a monk having fallen into the hands of a troop of disorderly soldiers, was so alarmed that he dropped down covered with bloody sweat.

When Augustus summoned to a conference the governor of Montmarin, and retained him prisoner with a threat of the most excruciating torture and death, if he did not abandon the place to him, he was so struck with terror, that drops of blood were seen on the whole surface of his body.

Dr. F. Caizerius, a highly respectable physician now living at Montpellier, mentions that in the year 1813, the friends of a lady hastily sent for him in consequence of their alarm occasioned by a transudation of blood from the superficial vessels of her skin during a paroxysm of anger.

Many well attested instances might be given, in which violent emotions of the mind have been attended by such complete loss of tone in the blood-vessels of the skin, that they have opposed no resistance to the transudation of blood from every part of the body.

It would be irrelevant to advance any professional observa-

tions on this subject, my simple object being to confirm the wavering belief of any who may doubt the possibility of the fact, and to impress more deeply my own mind, and the minds of your readers, with the aggravated sufferings and unparalleled love of him, who, when he knew, the price of pardon was his *blood*, hesitated not to pay the penalty required by inflexible justice as an atonement for the guilt of an apostate world.

I remain, gentlemen,

Yours, respectfully,

MEDICUS.

ESSAYS ON TRUTH.

No. II.

(Continued from page 272.)

HAVING defined the nature of truth in general, let us consider the *principal divisions under which the different kinds of truth may be classed.*

If truth be the subject of all knowledge, and includes every reality which is capable of being known, no limits can be assigned to its variety and extent, but those which terminate the existence of universal realities. Thus a field is opened for human inquiry, more extensive than the mind can contemplate, presenting before us an infinite variety of objects by the perception of which our knowledge may be perpetually increasing, without any possibility of coming to a point in which nothing more can be known. In every subject of a complicated description, our inquiries would be greatly facilitated, if the objects to be known could be arranged and simplified in subservience to the order of nature, and the general operations of the mind. Hence it may be remarked, that the different kinds of truth, however complex and diversified, may with propriety be arranged under a few general divisions, according to the objects

which it contemplates, or the process and evidences by which its agreement with the nature of things may be seen and known. As all things cognizable by the human mind may be referred, either to the constitution of nature,—the calculations of science,—the state of society,—or the interests of religion, so all kinds of truth may be classed under the four corresponding denominations of *physical, mathematical, political, and divine truth.*

By *physical truth* we mean the nature and properties of things, as perceived by the senses, and confirmed by observation, or actual experiment, in every department, animate and inanimate, of the material world. The astronomer who describes the form, motions, and other phenomena of the earth, its connexion with the solar system, the sun, moon, and stars: the botanist who describes the flowers, fruits, trees, and herbage growing upon the earth, and the animals that feed upon them. The chymist who studies the elements of the material system, or analyses the properties of which different substances are composed, and the laws by which all the combinations and dissolutions of nature are effected; the physician who examines the medicinal particles of different objects, in removing the diseases, and in improving the health of the human frame; and the agriculturist who studies the nature of soils, and their adaptation to different kinds of grain, and employs the means necessary to render the earth fruitful in providing for the wants both of man and beast; are all conversant with the realities of nature, which we call *physical truth*, and will rise to eminence and success in their several pursuits, in proportion to the number, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of their ideas. Some knowledge of these things

is imperceptibly acquired by every person, being forced upon the mind by the daily operation of the senses, and is indeed, in some respects, essential to common sense, and the ordinary discharge of the most common and necessary avocations. Hence, clearer views, and greater knowledge of natural objects, obtained by a careful exercise of their own senses, render some persons in the different walks and concerns of life, more prudent, skilful, and fortunate than others of the same age, rank, or advantages; while a nice and comprehensive discernment alone can secure eminence in the sciences before specified, and is absolutely essential to the artist, and the poet.

Under the denomination of *mathematical truth*, we may include all those principles, which are proved by the science of numbers, or the calculations which reason is enabled to establish by the rules of arithmetic. As the mind soon learns to distinguish one thing from another, and perceives that the whole of any thing is greater than a part, or that the addition of one to another will increase its number and magnitude, so it naturally wishes, by the application of certain rules of judging, to ascertain, for important purposes, the distance of one object, and the magnitude of another, the division of time, and the use of numbers. If in these respects we were left in uncertainty, and depended alone upon a random guess, or a doubtful conjecture, the greatest inconveniences would arise, and many of those transactions, which conduce to the welfare of society, and by the aid of science, are carried on with the greatest regularity and success, would be involved in confusion, and become, like the building of Babel, impracticable. Some acquaintance with

this division of truth is necessary to the most common engagements of trade, commerce, and mechanism, while greater degrees of it produce greater ingenuity, wisdom, and success. But while the mass of mankind are but just able to perform the simplest calculations, which every day renders necessary, the mathematician solves the most difficult problems, measures the circuit of the earth, squares the distances of the planets, and calculates with the utmost precision the revolutions of the sun, the moon, and the stars in their respective orbits. In this branch of truth we arrive at greater certainty than even by the testimony of our senses; since, if doubt arises respecting any thing which is said to be large or small, near or distant, and so on, we have only to work the process by the given rules, and the result will produce in the mind as firm a confidence as we can have of our own being.

The third division of truth may be called *political*, because it refers to the actual state of society, and exhibits a just view of the rights and obligations, the proceedings and revolutions, of mankind, in all ages of the world. The study and knowledge of this kind of truth deserves the attention, and may conduce to the improvement and pleasure of all men, while its attainment, in an eminent degree, is essential to the geographer, the historian, the legislator, and the politician. In this kind of truth, however, we can seldom arrive at absolute demonstration, but are obliged to rest upon human testimony, conveyed from man to man, by living witnesses of the facts, which they relate, or by the written statements of credible and well-informed historians. Here, therefore, we are liable to be imposed upon by falsehood, ignorance, and credulity, and amidst the clashing or erro-

neous statements of different persons, are obliged to rest our faith upon the most credible, or decide by a preponderance of natural probability and circumstantial proof.

But *divine truth*, in the fourth place, takes a nobler range, and, rising from the creature to the Creator, presents to the mind an idea of his attributes, government, and works, and of the relations, duties, and prospects, assigned by the wisdom of his arrangements to the human race. In the acquisition of this branch of truth, our attention is first called to the testimony of nature, which suggests to the natural reason of mankind, properly exercised, many important ideas of the eternal power and universal authority of Jehovah. From this source of information we should proceed to the traditions of antiquity, and the chief systems of theology devised by ingenious men, and established by different communities, ancient and modern, in the whole of which we should find error mixed with truth, and superstition and error mingled with piety and virtue. Perceiving by this process the insufficiency of human discoveries, our judgments will be prepared to study with advantage the revelation which it has pleased God to make of his own character, as recorded, for the direction of our faith and conduct, in the holy scriptures. This indeed comes to us with higher claims, and superior recommendations, and, in consequence of its purity, sacredness, and authority, as a divine system, is styled, by way of eminence, *the truth*, the most important truth, "the truth as it is in Jesus." Considerations the most impressive, therefore, urge us to review its facts, examine its evidences, consider its design, and investigate its doctrines; that, receiving the truth in its native purity, our hearts may be improved,

and our manners regulated by its influence and discoveries.

We proceed then to specify some of the peculiar properties of divine truth, which manifests its higher claims to the serious attention and unimpeachable fidelity of all men.

If the human mind were able to arrive at equal eminence in all the branches of human knowledge, to which we have briefly adverted, it would still be necessary to inquire the degree of attention to which they were severally entitled, in reference to the present conduct and future destiny of mankind. But though an individual or two, once in an age, might be named as an example of the possibility of universal knowledge, the least reflection will convince us, that very few have either means, or time, or capacity sufficient for such attainments; but that persons in general, who excel the most in their knowledge of one subject, are limited in their minds and information respecting others. Hence it happens that persons of distinguished eminence, as mathematicians, statesmen, and philosophers, are ignorant to an extreme of divine truth; while other men, greatly their inferiors in genius, literature, and science, have the clearest perception of the great principles and evidence of theological belief.

But whatever fame, or gratification may be connected with philosophical and scientific attainments, it ought to be remembered, that the knowledge of divine truth is *universally important*. Other sciences, however desirable, or necessary for some persons, possess only a partial interest, a subordinate importance, and a temporary utility.

But this, as it refers to the whole economy of human life, is the ground work of wisdom and virtue, happiness and honour; and should, therefore, be acquired

with sedulous attention by every individual, as the most necessary and valuable attainment. If, in the concerns of this life, no person can acquit himself with honour, or calculate upon success, unless he has first learnt the mysteries of his trade and calling, how can we expect to act wisely in seeking for glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, if we are ignorant of the means or principles, by which alone those great objects can be obtained? And though it must be supposed that the ministers of religion, whose office calls them to the defence of truth, should possess more knowledge of this subject than could be generally acquired by their hearers; yet never let it be imagined that theology is a science which concerns only the ministerial profession, since it affects the interests of all men alike, appeals to every man's conscience with the same claims and sanctions, and should, therefore, if possible, be universally enjoyed. A man that aims to pursue the true happiness of his nature, while he is ignorant of divine truth, resembles a blind man attempting to paint a landscape, or a deaf one, trying to learn music. Mistakes in common things are often hurtful, but error in religion and morality is like a poison infused into the bread we eat, or a pestilence spreading itself through the atmosphere.

But divine truth is likewise *uniform and immutable in its principles*. Whatever may be the whimsicalness or fluctuation of human systems or opinions, no change takes place in truth. As realities can never cease to be realities, it is impossible that one truth should be destroyed. If the facts stated in the gospel were ever true, they are true still. Time which alters things, produces no variation in truth, which is the immortality of their being. Human inventions

may overshadow the truth, as clouds overshadow the sun, but the sun itself is not affected by their sombrous shadow. Human opposition may attempt to undermine or overwhelm it, but, like the waves falling upon the flinty rock, they shall vent their fury, betray their weakness, and retire. Whatever fails, changes, or dies, the truth is secure in the fortress of its own immortality, "the same yesterday, to day, and for ever."

But divine truth is ascertainable by a process common to all men, and depends for its reception upon the state of the heart, as well as the light of the *understanding*. Though endless perplexities and doubts, in reference to the first principles of religion, have prevailed, and are still prevailing, an impartial inquiry would trace them, not to a deficiency of evidence, or a want of means, but to the moral and mental perversities of mankind, in connexion with the purity or mysteriousness of the truths themselves, and the kind of evidence on which their credibility is established. While natural truths are forced upon the mind, independently of our own inclinations, by the testimony of our senses; and mathematical ones by the demonstration of numbers, the principal theological truths are recommended to our faith by a rational and moral certainty only; which, however satisfying and decisive to a mind rightly disposed, may easily be obscured, depreciated, concealed, and rendered nugatory, by moral antipathies, prejudices, and pride. And yet, the evidences afforded as the ground of faith, and the means furnished for its perception, are suitable to the nature of men, and sufficient to justify and produce a rational, well-founded, and efficient confidence.

And finally, let us remember that divine truth is *sacred*, and should ever be inquired after and

discussed with becoming dispositions. The sacredness with which the Israelites approached the ark of the covenant which contained the divine testimony, and the symbol of his presence, was an emblem of the feelings we should cherish in penetrating the mysteries of divine truth. Its rays, beaming from the Deity, should render our inquiries modest and unassuming, like the cherubims who veil their faces before God. But it is in vain to ask, what is truth? unless we are disposed to wait for it with patience; to receive its lessons with humility, and to resign our wills to its decisions.

(To be continued.)

A SERIES OF LETTERS ADDRESS-
ED TO A MEMBER OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND, ON
THE SUBJECT OF DISSENT.

Letter IV.

The Form and Officers of the Church unscriptural.

My Dear Friend;

A FURTHER objection which I feel to the church of England, arises from a consideration of her general structure; and especially as it regards her officers, the undue influence of some, and the wretched subjugation of others: and as I am determined to be neither a tyrant nor a slave, I must separate from her communion.

The advocates of English episcopacy, in order to discover something in the Sacred Scriptures, to countenance their cause, adduce the church of the Jews, and ask, was it not national? was it not established? was it not identified with the political institutions of that people? In reply to these argumentative interrogations, allow me to ask also, was not that economy peculiar? and was not the whole fabric taken down and abolished by Jesus Christ, when he founded

that kingdom which is to stand for ever. Besides; though it is granted, that the Jewish church was both national and established, yet it is clear, that it was not established by the civil magistrate, nor by human compact, but by God himself, who became both its king and lawgiver; over which even then no human power was permitted to exercise an influence, either in its constitution, or its government. And had it not been so, yet it would have been unsuitable to be made a model of a church under so different a dispensation as that of christianity. Respecting the Jewish church, it has been well observed, that "it was an immediate consequence of that unexampled THEOCRACY to which the seed of Abraham were subjected; and which was designed to be a sacred figure of that more glorious CHRISTOCRACY under which the nations are, and, without exception, shall be blessed."

You will admit that it is not to Moses, but to Christ that we are to look, in order to ascertain what the will of God is under the present dispensation. Allow me, therefore, to ask you, did the Redeemer identify his religion with the political institutions existing in the day of his incarnation? And while he required his disciples to respect the civil authorities as such, and to "render unto Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's;" did he not inform them that his kingdom is not of this world? and did he not censure with just indignation the worldly spirit of Zebedee's children, who, together with their parent, entertained an idea that Jesus was about to establish a temporal kingdom?

While the religion of Christ was opposed to all the prejudices of that period, he never gave one intimation that it was his design to render it a national church,

or to put it under the protection of any civil institution, by identifying their natures or their interests.—Again; I would ask, did the public teachers of christianity, the apostles, and disciples of Christ, receive their authority to propagate their tenets from the civil magistrate, or were they in any respect authorized by him to embark in their arduous mission? Could they be considered as the ministers of a national religion? On the contrary; were not their designs, and the religious opinions of their country in diametrical opposition? Christ and his apostles neither courted the favours, nor feared the frowns of the civil powers, though they paid them all the respect which was due.

Though it is obvious that Christ never intended his ministers to be associated with the officers of state, either in spirit or in action, it is equally obvious, that those churches which they were the means of planting, were not in any sense national; and so far from being so, they were not even tolerated by the civil authorities, but were the objects of their most cruel jealousy and unrelenting persecution for a considerable length of time. The christian churches which were raised at Colosse, at Corinth, at Philippi, and at various other places, so far from being parts of a national system, were independent societies, and had no further connexion with, or dependence upon each other, than what resulted from mutual affection, and coincidence of principle.

The word *church* is no where used in the New Testament, to denote a national incorporation, or to convey the idea of a plurality of societies, excepting when it comprehends the whole body of christians wherever they exist: these constitute the church of Christ, or "the church of the

first born, whose names are written in heaven." Excepting this meaning of the word *church*, it is used in the New Testament to denote only an assembly of persons met together in some particular place, or distinct religious congregations. Therefore we never read of the church of the Roman empire, or of any other country, but of the church or churches of different places. Hence it is said, that "The churches had ~~rest~~ ^{rest} through all Judea;" that "Paul went through Syria confirming the churches;" "So were the churches established in the faith;"—"The churches of Christ salute you;"—"The messengers of the churches," &c. Where shall we find in the New Testament Scriptures, expressions analogous with the terms—"The Church of England," "The Church of Scotland," or "The Church of France?" From a view of the churches of primitive christianity, you will allow me to proceed to notice the officers who existed in these holy societies.—These officers were, in fact, but two, and these were **BISHOPS** and **DEACONS**, the ~~overseer~~ or **bishop**, you know, signifies an overseer; and those who are so called in the New Testament, were pastors over particular congregations of christians. They are denominated not only **bishops**, but also **elders**, or **presbyters**, **ministers**, &c. which are merely different names given to the same spiritual officers, and do not denote a variety of different officers.—The **DEACONS** of the primitive churches were no other than persons appointed to manage some temporal affairs which belonged to the churches, as for instance, to take care of the poor. The nature of their office is clearly specified in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.—The primitive churches recognized

these two descriptions of officers, and none other; and they exercised an absolute and uncontrollable freedom in the election of both, no other authority being allowed to interpose. On the same principles, our congregational dissenting churches are constituted at the present day.

But how remote from this simplicity, as well as from the usage of the first christian churches, is the conduct of your episcopal hierarchy! Within her pale, we find Archbishops, Diocesan Bishops, Archdeacons, Deans, Prebendaries, Canons, Minor Canons, Chancellors, Vicars-General, Commissaries, Officials, Surrogates, Proctors, Priests, Deacons, Curates, &c.—Nearly all of these are obviously of popish origin, the creatures of the Man of Sin, and prove, to a demonstration, the pernicious consequences of a union of church and state. Tell me, my dear friend, can you discover any thing in the New Testament, or in the structure and constitution of the first churches, to countenance the long catalogue of officers with which I have presented you, excepting Bishops, or Pastors, and Deacons?

However, to make the subject the less objectionable, and to bring it something nearer to the scriptural standard, you reduce all these officers to three orders, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; so that the whole of these officers range themselves under the one or the other of these divisions; but after all, these officers, understood as your church describes them, bear but very little resemblance to the pattern shown to us on the mount. How little do your bishops resemble the bishops of the primitive churches! The two archbishops of England are the two hands of the prince upon the throne, by which he controls all the twenty-

four diocesan bishops: under these diocesan bishops, are placed all the rest of the clergy, and all the churches in the kingdom, and all those which belong to our colonies abroad;—so that they are, in fact, but superintendents, not to work, but to see that others do the work. How different from the bishops of the first churches! These were real pastors, who preached the word, and were instant in season, and out of season, that they might feed their flocks with wisdom and knowledge.—As to the *priesthood*, you know that it related to sacrifices; and it was abolished by Jesus Christ, when, as the great high-priest of our profession, he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And by *deacons*, your church means spiritual officers; whereas, the scriptures mean by the term, only officers who have to do with the temporalities of the church,—your churchwar-dens more resemble them.

Your archbishops and bishops are vested by the laws of the land with great secular dignity and power, and have seats in the Upper House of Parliament. The ordaining of the clergy, the performance of the ceremony of confirmation, and the consecrating of churches and church-yards, belong to them.—Could the apostles rise from their graves, with what holy indignation would they frown upon this worldly sanctuary of popish superstition, in which so many, who do not work, feed upon the compulsory contributions of a reluctant people.

The authority with which the archbishops and bishops are invested, constitutes them absolute sovereigns, and they *may be*, and *sometimes are*, tyrants over their brethren, in direct opposition to the will of Christ, who positively forbids such an assumption of dominion. “Ye know

that the princes of the gentiles exercise dominion over them, but it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." "Be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Which, I ask, do your spiritual sovereigns follow, the example of "the princes of the gentiles," or the prescriptions of our Lord ? Alas ! the inferior clergy are mere abject vassals. The bishops, in order to put them under their footstool, require from them an oath of canonical obedience to themselves ; and in order that they may keep them in the degraded state to which this oath reduces them, possess a power of suspending them from the exercise of their ministerial functions. The doctrine of passive obedience, and non-resistance, is in full operation in your church. What a base and degraded spirit must it generate among your clergy, whose every thought, and every action, must be in unison with the will of a human superior.

To prove to you that such is the subjugated condition of the inferior descriptions of your clergy, you will permit me to make an extract or two from those very canons, which they swear to obey.—The forty-ninth canon forbids all persons, and candidates for holy orders, among the rest, from expounding the sacred scriptures till examined and licensed by a bishop. Six young gentlemen, you remember, a few years ago, were expelled from Edmund's Hall, Oxford, for a breach of this canon. The fifty-third canon prohibits any clergyman from attempting to confute any doctrine that has been taught in his own, or in any neighbouring church, until he has consulted the bishop of his diocese. The seventy-second for-

bids any minister, not licensed by the bishop, from attempting, upon any pretence whatever, "either of possession or obsession, by fasting and prayer, to cast out any devil or devils." Nay, the seventy-second prescribes the very dress of the clergy, so minutely, as even to require what sort of *buttons*, *night-caps*, and *hats*, they shall wear. That you may clearly see how completely your clergy are fettered, permit me to recommend to your careful perusal all the canons from the thirty-first to the seventy-sixth, inclusive, and then ask yourself the question,—can a clergyman of the church of England be a free agent ?

If I follow the dictates of my Bible, or my conscience, or my reason, I must dissent from a church so unscripturally constituted ; whose bishops are despots, and whose clergy are slaves. If I will be a free man, I must be a dissenter.

Hereafter I shall advance my objections to your Liturgy. In the mean while, permit me to assure you that I am your sincere friend,

TROPHIMUS.

To the Editors.

**MOURNING WITHOUT HOPE FOR
DEPARTED FRIENDS EXEM-
PLIFIED.**

THE Apostle, in writing to the Thessalonians, expresses his desire, that they should not be ignorant of the happy state of "those who sleep in Jesus ;" and that they should "sorrow not, even as others who have no hope." Never did I meet with any thing more calculated to exemplify the meaning of the Apostle, than Quintilian's Introduction to the Sixth Book of his celebrated Institutes, in which he complains of his misfortunes, in the loss of his wife and children. Referring to

the occasion on which he composed his work, and the protracted labour and study it had cost him, he says, "I had an eye to the care of the object of my own fondness, I mean my son, whose happy genius deserved all the attention of a father; and, considering this work as the best part of his inheritance, I hoped, that if the fates broke the thread of my life, he should still have his father as a tutor and master. But whilst, day and night, I laboured to execute my design, before mortality had exercised its power over me, I lost that promising son, the only hope of my old age. Who would not detest my insensibility, if I made any other use of my voice, than to vent complaints against the injustice of the gods, who have made me survive all that was dearest to me in the world? If I did not proclaim aloud, that there is no providence in the regulation of human affairs? That there is none, it is visible in regard to me, if not on account of my own misfortunes, at least on account of the undeserved destiny of my son, whom cruel death has torn from me."

After indulging, at considerable length, in these and similar complaints relative to his wife and first son, he proceeds to mourn for the loss of his second boy; and having commented upon his promising talents and amiable dispositions, exclaims, "O vain and deceitful hopes! O my dear son! Could I then have seen your eyes shut for ever to the light, and your soul departing from me? Could I receive your last breath, hold in my arms your motionless, lifeless, and frozen body, and not die of grief? Yes, I deserve the tortures I endure, and the melancholy reflections to which I devote myself. O my dear son! You, whom a consul had just adopted; you, whom a prætor, your

maternal uncle, had already designed for his son-in-law; you, who were to succeed your father in all his honours, and share them with him in his life-time; you, in whom every one thought to see revived the eloquence of the best ages; shall I never see you more, and shall I, a childless father, be condemned to live only to suffer? At least, you will have your revenge. It is with regret that I endure the light; to enjoy it would be a crime that must offend you; and if my life be my crime, it shall also be my punishment."

Such is the sorrow of those who have no hope in God, and who have no believing views of that blessed immortality which is brought to light through the gospel! From Quintilian's language, we may learn, that this kind of sorrow has its origin in the inordinate love of the creature; for where the heart is devoted to God, the loss of other objects is more easily supported, and less sensibly felt. How different the sentiments and feelings of Quintilian from those of Jeremiah, in circumstances still more afflictive! The one falls into an impious excess of grief, reproaching "the gods," and complaining of providence, or even denying its existence: the other, sensible of the divine wisdom and goodness, acknowledges the justice of heaven in the punishment of sin, and says, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." Quintilian can derive no consolation from the happiness of his wife and children in a better world; but when the christian sustains a similar loss, he feels an exalted satisfaction in the thought of following them to the right hand of his heavenly Father, where there are "pleasures for evermore." Believing that they are "taken away from the evil to come," he can say, with sweet submission to the will

of God, "I shall go to them, though they shall not return to me." His life, moreover, is not his "punishment;" for he can "rejoice in the Lord always;" and though he may find as much pleasure in "letters" as Quincilian did, they are not his "only solace in adversity." Religion opens to his mind more substantial pleasures; while it is his happiness, living and dying, to be the Lord's.—Let my soul be found

in Christ; and then, neither the death of friends, nor any other temporal calamity, can destroy my happiness; for none of these things shall separate the believer from the love of God. And while I glory in being a christian, let me be careful to follow those, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises; that, being "faithful unto death," I may receive "a crown of life."

J. B.

REVIEW OF BOOKS.

The Present State of Religious Parties in England, represented and improved, in a Discourse delivered in Essex-street Chapel, May 17th, and repeated, October 18th; also in Renshaw-street Chapel, Liverpool, Sept. 20th, 1818. By Thomas Belsham.

THIS sermon has, at least, one thing in common with a discourse of Paul's: it has been repeated, at the request of the people to whom it was originally delivered. Mr. Belsham does not, indeed, mention that it was repeated by request, but it is only fair to suppose so. Besides, the supposition is convenient for us, because it will readily account for the sermon being again preached at Liverpool. The interest excited by it at Essex-street Chapel would naturally commend it to the author as "worthy of all acceptance," and, therefore, an essential part of his travelling equipage. Then it found its way into Mr. Belsham's sermon-case; and now the favourable judgment passed in London is repeated and confirmed in Liverpool. But here a question (of doubtful disputation, alas!) arises: to which of these congregations are the public indebted for this sermon? The *first* may say, that but for their approbation at the time of its delivery, it might have been consigned to the common oblivion of pulpit manuscripts, because its modest author would not have allowed himself to think of it again, if his friends had not called for a repetition. On the other hand, however, the *second* may say, (and we think truly,) that but for their urging its publication, it might have rotted in Essex House. Indeed, much might be said on both sides:

"The wide, th' unbounded prospect
Lies before us;"—

but we dare not trust ourselves into a field where so much casuistry is required.

Perhaps the author himself has settled the question; for now that we look again, the *dedication* is confined to the UNITARIAN CHRISTIANS "assembling in Renshaw-street Chapel, Liverpool." Not a word of acknowledgment is addressed to the original hearers; although, as has been already hinted, they were the *primum mobile* in sending it to Lancashire. This comes of doing things by halves! Had they, instead of requesting it to be repeated, come forward, on May 17th, or even on October 18th, 1818, and urged its publication, although without "the generous offer of bearing the expense," they might have had all the credit of bringing it forward; but now they have none, except for the exercise of patience, in hearing it twice. Let them, however, console themselves, by remembering, that, if "slow to speak" in this instance, they have been signally prompt in bringing forward similar "little tracts," which, but for *their* zeal, might have been unknown to the public.

By this time, some of our readers (dull ones, of course) imagine that we are making much ado about nothing, and are ready to say, that the original hearers are neither likely to feel hurt nor disappointed by this Dedication, which excludes them. Are they not? They ought, however, to feel both, and that keenly; for, if Mr. Belsham's sermon prove true, either as sentiment or as prophecy, the credit of being the first to patronise it, will surpass the fame of discovering the principle of gravitation, or of inventing the mariner's compass. We hesitate not to affirm this roundly; for, let our readers, who think lightly of our lucubrations, know, to their confusion, that this sermon aims at proving that *all parties* "are one in Christ Jesus;" or, what amounts to the same thing, that "Christ is in all." Now, what is this but the discovery of a prin-

inciple of moral gravitation, which reduces all parties to a common centre? Even Sir Richard Phillips, with all his hatred to the doctrine of gravitation, is not likely to attempt the overthrow of this system. At least, if he should dispute its accuracy, it will be an ungenerous enterprise, seeing it leaves room even for his own creed. But this remark has well-nigh diverted us from our other metaphor,—the mariner's compass. That, however, must not be; for Mr. Belsham has found out, that Christ is the magnetic pole of all parties, and that their different, even their *contradictory* systems of christianity, are only so many polar *dips* and *equatorial varieties*;—in plain English, only modifications and accidents of one thing, in the investigation of which, “*from circumstances over which they had no control, they have not been equally successful*” as Unitarian christians have been. Now, if all this prove eventually true, we repeat it, that the Essex-street Unitarians have ample reason for feeling hurt and disappointed that their name is not coupled with their Renshaw-street brethren, as the patrons of this grand discovery. But it is now high time to produce an analysis of the sermon itself. The text which, like Newton's falling apple, suggested to Mr. Belsham this new theory of moral gravitation, is the following:—“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all.” Col. iii. 11.

We need hardly say, that this is an apple from the tree of life; but we must, at the same time, hint to our readers, that if they do not take it for granted that the apple fell for the purpose just mentioned, they may, for any good they will derive, leave the sermon unread. To read it, under an idea that the apple was rudely knocked off by throwing stones among the branches of that tree, must prevent the reasoning from having its desired effect. Having provided against the intrusion of such an idea, we have now to state, that twenty-three pages of this sermon are occupied by sketches of the various denominations of christians in England. The originality and luminous arrangement of this department cannot fail to strike every one who is aware that our best grammarians begin by stating the number of letters in the alphabet, and then proceed to divide them into vowels and consonants. We are told, that “the two great classes of religious professors in this country are Churchmen and Dissenters;” that Churchmen are “together far more numerous than any class of nonconformists separately considered, but perhaps infe-

rior to the whole collectively;” that “the established church is at this time divided into two great parties,” the “political expedient” party, and the evangelical party, “who seriously believe the doctrines of the articles, and who publicly profess and teach them.” “There is also a third party in the church,” which is probably as growing, and may, perhaps, eventually be the “prevailing one;”—“those who study the scriptures seriously, without regard to formularies and creeds;” these, “for reasons which to themselves are satisfactory, chuse to remain quietly within the pale of the church; being, at the same time, anxious for a reformation in its articles, &c. and watchful for an opportunity of promoting and accelerating this desirable object.” Now, if all this be not *new* to the world, it is not Mr. Belsham's fault: but, perhaps, the following information will be thought even more novel. The nonconformist churches are divided into “Presbyterians and Independents; Baptists, General and Particular; Methodists, Calvinistic and Arminian; Quakers, Unitarians,” and a *nameless* party, “who deny the permanency of the institution of baptism”!!!

We can assure our readers, that none of the parties thus enumerated by the author are misrepresented or underrated. But if *they* have no reason to complain, Sandemanians, Swedenborgians, Socinians, &c. &c. have; for they are not even mentioned, either as parties or as christians. And this is the more remarkable, seeing Mr. Belsham has said expressly, that

“Generally speaking, the christian religion, in *every form*, produces effects which are upon the whole highly beneficial. In its *most corrupted state*, christianity teaches the doctrine of a future state of reward and punishment; in its *most degraded form*, the religion of Jesus provides for the poor,” &c. —p. 32.

If, therefore, in “*every form*,” “*the most corrupted*,” “*the most degraded*,” christianity is beneficial, why not enumerate all the forms which exist in England? especially as the author has shown a way in which “*how widely soever they may be separated* from each other, by external distinctions and by party names,” they may “*approve themselves to be all one in Christ Jesus.*” And the way is,—

“Let each denomination be ambitious to manifest the superior excellence of its own creed, by the superior sanctity, benevolence, and active usefulness of its professors.” p. 43.

Now, is this admonition confined to the denominations enumerated in the sermon? If it is, the “*corrupted and degraded*” forms are among *them*; and

it devolves upon Mr. Belsham to show how any degree of personal "sanctity" can manifest "superior excellence" in the creed or creeds thus degraded and corrupted. But again, if he regard as anti-christian the sects which he has not named, (and they all *profess* the religion of Jesus in some form,) then we are brought to the question, what is christianity? Now, if his notion of it exclude Swedenborgianism, our's excludes Unitarianism, and thus we are thrown back upon the premises of the point at issue. If, again, Mr. Belsham's admonition extend to all parties, and he admit that "Christ is in all," it devolves upon him to show how contradictory notions of Christ can be equally saving. Christ, by the Unitarian party, is regarded merely "as the servant and messenger of God, in all respects like unto his brethren;" whereas Christ, by our party, is regarded as "God manifest in the flesh;" now, either we "believe a lie," or *they* disbelieve a truth of the first magnitude, and thus make "God a liar." And until Mr. Belsham can prove that lies may be believed with safety, and God made a liar with impunity, he has done less than nothing in this sermon. Here, then, we might leave it; but having taken it up, in order to expose the *east* of Unitarianism, we must embody in words that likeness of its author which is reflected from its surface.

It presents to the eye "an old man" taking a parting survey of the religious world, which he is about to leave, until the heavens and the earth be no more. He perceives clearly that religious professors are divided into sects, each of which has something in common with all the rest, and some of them something so peculiar to themselves, that the greater part of the others consider it *fatal*. Aware, therefore, that he himself belongs to this peculiar class which exists "amidst the clamours of a host of adversaries," he sets himself to the task of proving that "Christ is in all" parties, however "corrupted the state," or "degraded the form," of their christianity. No matter that he regards the majority of them as believing a lie, as making it "hard to say what polytheism is, if their's be the pure doctrine of revelation;" all this has arisen "from circumstances over which they had no control;" and, therefore, they are not criminal, but have merely been less "successful" than himself "in the investigation of truth." This being the case, he regards their differences and contradictions but as so many styles of naval architecture, which, although they may affect the speed of sailing, cannot prevent any from reaching the port in safety, seeing Christ is in all. Such is the

mode in which Mr. Belsham attempts to conciliate and smooth down the asperities of sects. Though an old man, he even stoops to flatter the ambition of each, by suggesting a way in which the most corrupt may "manifest the superior excellence of its own creed," by superior sanctity of character; as if character could make errors and absurdities excellent; as if good actions could give to *lies* an excellence superior to truth! This is the logic of a professed logician! This is the divinity of an aged divine! But we cannot find words to express our contempt for such juggling. To conclude: we, indeed, regard all parties who believe in a divine and atoning Saviour, as one in Christ, as stars which differ from each other only "in glory;" but the "wandering stars," which depart from the fixed orbit of scripture, we must regard as on the way to "the blackness of darkness;" and, therefore, conscientiously, dare not return them the compliment they pay to us. Christ is in *no party*, except where he is owned and honoured, both as God and man.

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*Interesting Selections of Christian Biography and Obituaries.* By William Innes, Minister of the Gospel. Edinburgh: Waugh and Innes. London: Hamilton. 1818. 12mo. pp. 171.

To Mr. Innes we have been indebted for several very useful publications: not imposing in their pretensions, but very valuable in their tendency. His *Sketches of Human Nature* ought to be read by every christian, and especially by the members of dissenting churches; they contain a fund of good sense, and practical wisdom, by attending to which, many evils might be prevented, and much good done in the intercourse of christian society. His *Instruction for Young Inquirers*; and *Family Visitor*; show how desirous he is of being useful to his fellow creatures; and are well fitted to promote the objects they have in view.

The present publication, we think, calculated to improve both the taste and the dispositions of youth. It contains more or less extended accounts and notices of Polycarp, Pliny's Letter to Trajan, Wickliffe, John Hus, Jerome of Prague, Luther, and Tindal. The selections are made from different periods of the Church of Christ; and the author has mingled with them short notices of the history of the church, in so far as it is connected with that of the individuals whose life and death are recorded. As there is a probability that Mr. Innes will continue these selections, at a future period, we rather regret that there is not something more of unity in

his plans. If he had given, in the present volume, lives of the most celebrated individuals in the primitive age of the church; the next volume might have contained the most distinguished of the Reformers; and a third, we may add, might have given us the lives of some of those not less distinguished individuals, who laboured and suffered for a second reformation, the Puritan divines. In this volume we are transported at once, from Polycarp, and Pliny, to Wickliffe, and Tindal. We suggest this improvement to the consideration of the author, in his future progress. The selection, as it stands, is complete and interesting; the most striking circumstances, in the history and deaths of the several individuals, are brought together with care and taste, and described in simple but appropriate language. The account of Luther occupies the full half of the volume, and embraces most of the events in the life of that extraordinary man, and of the no less extraordinary period in which he lived. To make extracts, or enter into the detail of a compilation, would be improper: we therefore simply express our satisfaction with this little work, and heartily recommend it to those who are desirous of the improvement of youth, or whose limited circumstances prevent access to the expensive works, in which the lives of the individuals of this selection are more fully detailed.

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An Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns. Second Edition, corrected and improved. By the Rev. T. Cloutt. London. Sold by Conder; Williams; and Baynes; Sheep, 3s. 6d. Calf, 4s. 6d.

An Appendix, or Supplement to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, ought to be distinguished by those many excellencies which have secured to his poetical compositions such just and universal esteem. Protestant Dissenters, of all denominations, have been so long accustomed to admire the evangelical principles, the devotional spirit, and the soft and flowing numbers of Watts, that prejudices and partialities, which have acquired strength with their growth, seem to secure to him the undisputed privilege of leading our thoughts and feelings, in celebrating, in divine song, the praises of our heavenly Father, and the love of our great Redeemer. That there is not a sufficient variety in Watts, nor hymns adapted to many important and interesting subjects and occasions, are facts universally admitted. Many collections have been formed at different periods with a view to supply these deficiencies, but they have not

been executed with that taste, judgment, and piety, which the end and design so imperiously required: the present collection, which is offered as an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, is entitled to decided preference, and is, in our opinion, by far the most valuable and judicious that has yet been presented to the public. We cordially recommend it to christians of all denominations, but particularly to churches of the congregational order. We have noticed no expression of a low, or trivial nature; nothing that is unsuitable to the seriousness and dignity of a worshipping assembly. There are no allusions to party sentiments or principles. The compositions are chaste in point of language; poetical in their form and construction; calculated to promote a candid, a pious, and a heavenly spirit, and eminently displaying those great and glorious truths which inspired the songs of angels, when announcing to man the birth of a Redeemer. We have noticed a few slight typographical errors, which, in a future edition, we hope to see corrected.

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*Sermons preached in the Tron Church, Glasgow. By Dr. Chalmers. London: Longman and Co. Price 12s.*

We meet Dr. Chalmers, as we should the war-horse in Job, with feelings which almost unfit us for marking his port or measuring his paces: "his neck is clothed with thunder; the glory of his nostrils is terrible; he paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength." To mount such a theological *Bucephalus* is an enterprise as perilous as it is sublime, and requires equal fortitude in reference to him and to the public who look on. We have, however, come to the resolution of attempting it at all hazards: not indeed with the hope of taming this fiery courser, (that would be presumptuous, after so many curbs, martingales, and whips, have been applied to him in vain,) but merely to continue the system of *manège* toward him, that others may be deterred from imitating his eccentric motions. With his port and bearing, so far as they are opposed to that "fear of man which bringeth a snare,"—we are both delighted and dazzled; and most readily acknowledge that his caparison, though not to our taste in every thing, has "holiness to the Lord" written upon all its "bells." This is as it should be; and cheerfully do we exclaim, as he goeth out to the battle against the king's enemies, "In thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness, and righteousness." But why should Dr. Chalmers make war against the acknowledged

laws of good writing? Why reject the circulating medium of intellectual communication, and substitute local tokens from his own mint, which have neither more value nor beauty to commend them? Why encumber his glowing pages with extravagances which answer no purpose, except to shake our confidence in the solidity of his judgment? We could write these questions with tears,—such is our love, our veneration for this “able minister of the New Testament.” No national bigotry, nor party spirit guides our pen; but we could submit our hearts to the most rigid inspection, confident that it could not reveal to him a single sentiment or feeling of prejudice with respect to himself. We regard him indeed as “set for the defence of the gospel,” by the author of the gospel; and under the influence of these feelings, we proceed to give our estimate of his labours.

Such a champion in the arena of spiritual warfare, ought to be hailed with acclamations, and heralded by every loyal trumpet on the walls of Zion. The world ought to be apprized that he has thrown down the gauntlet of defiance to the Goliath of modern infidelity,—that he has sounded his challenge at the very gates of prostituted science, and, in the greatness of his strength, grappled with spiritual wickednesses in high places. Nor has he done so in vain: we are now less teased than formerly by the flippant questions of superficial reasoners, and the stale cavils of self-elected philosophers. His writings have brought the question of *external evidence* to such an issue, and wound up the public mind to such pitch, that absolute infidelity alone can take the field against him in his own sphere. We say *his own sphere*,—because we confine ourselves to the dilemma to which he has reduced science on the subject of revelation: he has, in fact, left her no alternative but to embrace christianity, or to abandon her own first principles; and thus he has so limited and illuminated the field, that no-one will venture into it, who is not prepared to brave and bear the odium of godless scepticism. Hence, the ministers of Satan can no longer “transform themselves into angels of light,” upon the thrones of science; but must stand revealed in their true character, or retreat to other ground. Neither geologists nor astronomers can spring a mine, nor hurl a comet against Moses or Christ, without betraying an infidel hand, because it is now well understood, that every well ascertained fact in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, illustrates and confirms the *dicta* of revelation. The process by which Dr. Chalmers has established this

living conviction in the public mind, has indeed laid him open to attacks of another kind, and from a different quarter; but the conviction he aimed at, is established, and that without any serious injury to the question of *internal evidence*: its importance is not overthrown by his underrating it; but those who understand it better than Dr. Chalmers seems to do, appeal to it as formerly, and those who have not studied it, take it for granted, as usual. This being the practical sum of the whole matter, we cannot but regret that he has been more severely dealt with than his error (for such we clearly consider it) required: to couple his name with that arch-infidel *HUME*, and to lash him with a whip of scorpions, can only brand the name and betray the rashness of the man who has done so. Might not that whip have been spared for college discipline, in the event of *gownsmen* straying into dissenting chapels? Such crimes may happen in the north! Or it might have been kept to chastise Bible and missionary societies, if they should ever address their reports to the divinity chair of a university! Or, it might have been reserved to shake in the synod, in the event of any established clergyman so forgetting himself in the pulpit, as to announce a sermon by a Dissenter! Such occasions would doubtless be *worthy of such discipline*: and truly in these degenerate days, ample provision must be made, in order to guard against these ominous “signs of the times”!

But we return to Dr. Chalmers. The practical effect of his “*Evidences*,” and his astronomical sermons, has been the establishment of the correction already mentioned. But while they have immortalized him as a man of genius and a philosopher,—the sermons, viewed as all sermons should be, in reference to the ultimate *end of preaching*, left this impression upon more minds than ours, that such lectures were but ill adapted to a promiscuous audience; that no audience, however select, was likely to reap much spiritual benefit from them; that if they were, in fact, specimens of the instructions given in the *Tron church*,—it was not “good” to be often there. We had indeed heard of the regenerating process which Dr. Chalmers's mind had undergone, but this only added to our disappointment in his sermons, because, from what we ourselves know of that process, we were led to expect that those truths by which it was produced, would so engage and engross all his thoughts, that not even the *stars* would divert his attention, or divide his zeal; but that the *new world of grace* would so captivate his ardent mind, that the *new world of science* would be

the last theme of his preaching. We saw indeed, with pleasure, that, like the apocalyptic angel, while flying in the midst of heaven, he had "the everlasting gospel to preach,"—that he planted the banner of the cross upon every star which he visited,—that he put all worlds in subjection to the shepherd of this, and made the bow of our covenant embrace within its mighty compass, and illumine with its celestial light, all the orbs of infinite space. This we saw, and loved him at least for the piety of the speculation. But still we wondered that one, thus zealous, and loyal to the King of kings, should choose an embassy so far abroad, when so many provinces at home were in a state of rebellion and anarchy; and our astonishment was increased every time we recollect that this was his *first* embassy after "the ministry of reconciliation" was committed to him.

Another effect of these sermons was, that their novelty, both as to matter and manner, produced a host of imitators among preachers, who were any thing but such philosophers as Dr. Chalmers. Dazzled by the prospect which he had opened, young ministers especially rushed forward in this new track, and astonished sober citizens and simple villagers with good news from far distant worlds. And those who could not lead forth the stars as a flock, nor call them all by their names, succeeded admirably in their imitations of Dr. Chalmers's quaint, uncouth, and cumbrous language. Like the priests of Moscow, who, in reading the litany, strive to enunciate as one word the contents of a whole page,—these imitators studied how far they could depart from common phraseology and natural combinations. For "unchristian tempers," we heard of "unchristian attitudes":—for "wise to win souls," we had "putting forth expedients":—and were assured that before we could comprehend spiritual things, "we should need to describe a mighty and still untrodden interval from all our present habits of conception":—*cum multis aliis*. Now on these and many other accounts, we most sincerely wished that Dr. Chalmers would redeem, by a volume of plain and accurate gospel sermons, both his literary and ministerial character from being the occasion of pedantry and extravagance in some, and of suspicion in others. We had so frequently been assured that his ordinary style of preaching was every thing that could be wished, in point of language and sentiment, that we hailed the first intimation of the volume before us, and ventured to assure all who talked with us, that when it appeared, it would be "in the words

which the Holy Ghost teacheth;"—and, like his own private character, a model of primitive truth and simplicity. And these hopes were only the *seeds* of greater: we fondly calculated upon the mighty influence it would have in checking among modern theologians "the lusts of the mind;" because we argued thus; surely, when it is seen that Dr. Chalmers, with all his learning and genius, with all his power of imagination and embellishment, confines himself to the gospel, and uses "great plainness of speech;"—less gifted ministers will become more self-denying, and, instead of indulging their propensity to theorize and embellish, they will exert themselves to simplify and endear the truth; and thus ornament will give place to information, and splendour to point. It was in this temper, and with such anticipations, that we opened the present volume. How far our hopes are realized, will appear not from any formal declaration, but from the tenor of the following remarks. We begin, however, by quoting Dr. Chalmers's own account of his sermons.

"The doctrine which is most urgently and most frequently insisted on in the following volume, is that of the depravity of human nature, and it were certainly cruel to expose the unworthiness of man, for the single purpose of disturbing him. But the cruelty is turned into kindness, when, along with the knowledge of the disease, there is offered an adequate and all-powerful remedy. It is impossible to have a true perception of our own character, in the sight of God, without feeling our need of *acquittal*; and in opposition to every obstacle which the justice of God seems to hold out to it, this want is provided for in the gospel. And it is equally impossible to have a true perception of the character of God, as being utterly repugnant to sin, without feeling the need of *amendment*; and, in opposition to every obstacle which the impotency of man holds out to it, this want is also provided for in the gospel. There we behold the amplest securities for the peace of the guilty. But there do we also behold securities, equally ample for their progress and their perfection in holiness." Preface.

In these few words, the author has given the substance of his volume, and certainly the substance of the *gospel* too; since he means by "ample securities" for "acquittal and amendment"—the satisfaction of law and justice by the sacrifice of Christ. But our readers will be grievously disappointed, if, from this specimen of the *multum in parvo*, they should expect equal distinctness and compression of sentiment in every page. They must therefore prepare themselves to find every important idea, and especially the leading one, shifted through all the signs of the verbal zodiac.

**Repetitions** repeated distinguish the sermons before us from all we have either heard or read. The leading idea has more phases than all the moons of Herschel. Of this, however, the author is aware.

"The anxious enforcement of one great lesson on the part of a writer, generally proceeds from a desire to effect a full and adequate conveyance into the mind of another, of some truth, which has filled his own mind by a sense of its importance; and in offering this volume to the public, the author is far from being insensible to the literary defects that from this cause may be charged on it. He knows in particular, that throughout these discourses, there is a frequent recurrence of the same idea, though generally expressed in different language, and with some new speciality, either in its bearing, or in its illustration." Preface.

But if, by this diffuse process, Dr. Chalmers sometimes weakens a striking thought, occasionally his repetitions of a powerful idea are so well managed, and tell with such effect upon his design, that they may be quoted as masterpieces of persuasion and remonstrance. The seventh sermon, entitled, "The folly of men measuring themselves by themselves," is, throughout, a specimen of this kind. His object is to expose and break up the system of *conventional morality*, and never, surely, was this "refuge of lies" so roughly handled. We have read in the natural history of that remarkable serpent called the *anaconda*, that, having recruited his strength in the tree where he stripped himself of his old slough, he continues to wind and wanton among its branches, like the Aurora Borealis among the clouds; shifting and shining in all the agility and freshness of a regenerated being, until his prey appear. But during these glittering movements, his tail grasps invincibly some commanding point of the trunk; remaining fixed as a sheet anchor in the cleft of a rock, while his body like the lithè cable, and his head like the heaving vessel, wave and float all around the vicinity. Thus prepared and employed, should a wild buffalo venture within his reach, the scaly toils of the serpent are cast over him in the twinkling of an eye,—the first coillashes him to the trunk, and before his consternation can subside, he is immoveably fixed. Folds upon folds multiply and press, forcing his fractured ribs, like forked arrows, into his entrails. Then, the *anaconda*, uncoiling himself from his mangled victim, seems for a moment as if he would leave him to crawl off; but he only disengages himself, that he may return with redoubled fury, and by repeated girdlings, complete his victory. Now, just so Dr. Chalmers grap-

ples with conventional morality. Having made the tree of life his dwelling place, he, at times, winds and wantons in its branches with such a grace and glory, that even the "Pharisees and Sadducees" stop to gaze; imagining that the majestic creature is intent only upon his own pleasure or their amusement. Under this idea, they crowd around, watching his motions; and while his vaulting and coiling display the variegated splendour of his scales, the fascination of his eye charms the gazers nearer and nearer, until within his reach: then, he springs on them, with overwhelming power, and, like the animal alluded to, bruises as he binds them hand and foot.

We shall justify this illustration, which, after all, we fear our readers will deem but a clumsy one, by the following extract from the seventh sermon:

"Is it not thus that many are lulled into security, because they are as good or better than their neighbours? This may do for earth, but the question we want to press is will it do for heaven? Under the influence of this delusion, thousands and tens of thousands are posting their infatuated way to a ruined and undone eternity. The good man of society lives upon the applause and cordiality of his neighbours. He compares himself with his fellow man; and their testimony to the graces of his amiable and upright and honourable character, falls like the music of paradise upon his ears. And it were also the earnest of paradise, if these his flatterers and admirers were to be his judges in the day of reckoning. But, alas! they will only be his fellow-prisoners at the bar. The eternal Son of God will preside over the solemnities of that day. He will take the judgment upon himself, and he will conduct it on his own lofty standard of examination, and not on the maxims or the habits of a world lying in wickedness. O ye deluded men! who carry your heads so high, and look so safe and so satisfied amidst the smooth and equal measurements of society; do you ever think how you are to stand the admeasurement of Christ and of his angels? and think you that the fleeting applause of mortals, sinful as yourselves, will carry an authority over the mind of your Judge, or prescribe to him that solemn award which is to fix you for eternity?" p. 198, 199.

This is the first clasping coil which Dr. Chalmers throws around the deluded. He then proceeds to show those "who look so safe and satisfied," after comparing themselves with others, that

"There is not a congregated mass of human beings, associated in one common pursuit, or brought together by one common accident, among whom there is not established some tacit or proclaimed morality, to the observance of which there is awarded admiration or disgrace by the voice of the society that is formed by them. You cannot bring two or more human beings to act in concert, without some conventional prin-

iple of right and wrong arising out of it, which either must be practically held in regard, or the conceit is dissipated. *And yet it may be altogether a conceit of iniquity.*" "It may be a banded conspiracy against the peace and the property of the commonwealth; and there may not be a member belonging to it, who does not carry the stamp of outlawry upon his person, and who is not liable, and rightly liable, to the penalties of an outraged government, against which he is bidding, by the whole habit of his life, a daily and systematic defiance. And yet even among such a class of the species as this, an enlightened observer of our nature will not fail to perceive a standard of morality, both recognised and acted upon by all its individuals; and in reference to which morality, there actually stirs in many a bosom among them a very warm and enthusiastic feeling of oblation;—and some you will find, who, by their devoted adherence to its maxima, earn among their companions all the distinctions of honour and virtue, and others who, by falling away from the principles of the compact, become the victims of a deep and general execration. And thus may the very same thing be perceived with them, that we see in the more general society of mankind, a scale of character; and, corresponding to it, a scale of respectability, along which the most wicked and worthless association on earth may be ranged according to the gradation of such virtues as are there held in demand and reverence." "We want not to shock the pride or the delicacy of your feelings. But, on a question so high as that of your eternity, we want to extricate you from the power of every vain and bewildering delusion." p. 200—202.

And now, let our readers mark the process by which Dr. Chalmers attempts to extricate them: he brings before them bands of smugglers and robbers; and proves that *they* have a standard of right and wrong, according to which, esteem and contempt are awarded. He then leads the conventional moralists into the jail, and over to Botany-Bay, and finds in each scene of felony, "men comparing themselves by themselves" with the same composure and complacency, as are witnessed in respectable society.

"We want to urge upon you that lesson of scripture, that this world differs from a prison house, only in its being a more spacious receptacle of sinners. There is not a wider distance in point of habit and of judgment, between a society of convicts, and the general community of mankind, than there is between the whole community of our species, and the society of that paradise, from which, under the apostacy of our fallen nature, we have been doomed to live in dreary alienation." "There may emanate from our persons a certain beautyousness of moral colouring on those who are around us, but when seen through the universal morality of God's extended and all-pervading government, we may look as hateful as the outcasts of felony; and living, as we do,

in a rebellious province that has broken loose from the community of God's loyal and obedient worshippers, we may, at one and the same time, be surrounded by the cordialities of an approving fellowship, and be frowned upon by the supreme judiciary of the universe. At one and the same time we may be regaled by the incense of the world's praise, and be the object of heaven's most righteous execration." p. 212—214.

(To be continued.)

*Lectures on the principal Evidences, and the several Dispensations of revealed Religion; familiarly addressed to young Persons.* By W. Roby. 8vo. pp. 372. London: Longman and Co. Conder, &c.

MR. ROBY very justly remarks, in the opening sentence of his preface, that "a benevolent and active concern for the rising generation forms one distinguishing feature of the present times." It does so, and is a feature of the most encouraging and hopeful cast, especially when contemplated in union with a corresponding disposition, manifested by our youth, to receive the fullest supplies of intellectual gratification and religious instruction, that matured and enlightened christians are able to furnish.

It occasions the most delightful astonishment to reflect upon the change in this respect, which thirty years have produced. About that time since, how few were the works that a christian parent could safely put into the hands of his children! And in the absence of nearly every thing that could enlighten and enlarge the youthful mind, how despicable and pernicious were the publications appropriated to the young by servile scribblers and mercenary tradesmen! But now, whatever can simplify and familiarize the various branches of science; whatever can describe the outline, and disclose the beauties of ancient and modern history; and, especially, whatever can contribute to the production of right sentiments in morals and religion, to the explanation of scripture, and the adjustment of the christian character, is placed within our reach, and that by authors whose names assure us, not only of the purity of their design, but the certainty of its accomplishment.

Among those who have undertaken the important task of making our children better acquainted with revelation and religion, we welcome Mr. Roby with peculiar pleasure, and have no hesitation in saying, that we deem this work decidedly superior to all others of the same class. We prefer it even to Dr. Gregory's "Letters on the Christian Religion," and Mr. Gisborne's "Summary of Divine Revelation." In making these assertions, we shall no

doubt startle some of our readers; and as their wonder and confusion may lead them to mistake our meaning, and censure our judgment, we shall take the liberty of stating the chief reasons for our preference of Mr. Roby's work. Several approved and able authors, including the two of acknowledged merit above-mentioned, have conceived an intention to write and publish for young inquirers, on the evidences and doctrines, the immunities and obligations of christianity, as they are antecedently represented in the Old Testament, and completely disclosed and confirmed in the New. The design has been highly commendable, and its accomplishment has been thought, by those who conceived it, to be perfectly easy:—any tolerable ability to write on the subject has been supposed to insure a ready and successful conveyance of it to the minds of youth; and whatever difficulty has appeared in the way of attempting to interest and edify adult and aged readers; no obstruction has seemed to discourage the transfer of the author's attention to young persons,—nothing has appeared to render dubious the success of his efforts to graft pure and undefiled religion upon youthful ingenuousness and susceptibility. In this fearless state of mind, the attempt has been very frequently made, but has very seldom succeeded. And why has it so often failed? We have several hints to give in reply to this question. The style adopted by the authors has been adorned by too lively an imagination, or wrought by too laborious an effort: reasoning and argument have too frequently taken the place of evidence, illustration, example, and fact: sufficient regard has not been paid to authorities, indisputable, known, and easy of access: perspicuous arrangement has been sacrificed to a rapid flow of thought and language, calculated to display the writer's ability more than to fix the reader's attention: care has not been taken to relieve the youthful mind by the introduction of modern, appropriate, and elucidating events: terms have been employed, current indeed among religious people, and used by the initiated with some definite meaning, but not sufficiently lucid and appropriate for the youthful unpractised inquirer: and, what is more to be regretted than all the rest, a mean disposition has too frequently been betrayed, under a professed desire to awaken the young to the importance of religious truth, to proselyte them to some peculiar modification of its doctrines, and some restricted observance of its ceremonies and duties.

We are happy to say, that from these blemishes, Mr. Roby's work is generally

free. We think we discern, in some parts, too strong a predilection for systematic theology, which occasionally tempts him to deduce more meaning from certain prophetic and figurative passages of scripture, than they could have been intended to convey, and to give them a place among the proofs of his creed, which they do not fairly and suitably occupy. We are sorry, likewise, to observe an occasional tameness of language; and sometimes a brevity and haste in closing an important paragraph, which leads to the introduction of some trite remark, and, by curtailing the argument, diminishes, if not destroys its effect. But these, the only material faults that we have been able to discern in the work, so rarely occur, and occur amidst so much truth of sentiment, purity of style, soundness of reasoning, and benevolence of design, that we should not qualify our praise by mentioning them, did not the accompanying excellencies render them the more obvious, and therefore the more desirable to be avoided in a future edition.

There are four principal divisions in Mr. Roby's plan. The first contains introductory lectures; the second, lectures on the evidences of revelation; the third, lectures on its several dispensations; and the fourth, concluding lectures. The first division contains lectures on the nature and importance of real religion; on the spirit of religious inquiry; on the source of religious knowledge; and on pretended divine revelations. The second division includes lectures on the evidences of the genuineness and authenticity of the Jewish and christian scriptures; on the divine inspiration of the scriptures, particularly the evidence arising from miracles; on the evidence arising from prophecy; on the general and internal evidences; and on the futility of objections. The third division comprises lectures on the dispensation with man in his state of original innocence; on the covenant of works; on the mediatorial dispensation, or the covenant of grace; on the Adamic dispensation, or the covenant with our first parents after their fall; on the covenant with Noah; on the Abrahamic covenant; on the Mosaic economy; on the christian dispensation; and on the future state. The fourth division comprehends lectures on the sufficiency and authority of the scriptures; on the duty of searching the scriptures; on the regard due to things secret and things revealed.

Of the introductory lectures, that on pretended divine revelations is, as a whole, the best: but we were sorry to observe in it a remark capable of an in-

terpretation, which the author would be the first to disclaim. He seems to imply that the oracle which the Jews denominated *Bath-col*, and of which they boasted as the substitute and successor of the Urim and Thummim, *might sometimes be a divine reality*. Dr. Prideaux has sufficiently proved, that, instead of a voice from heaven, it was a method of divination of mere human origin: and Mr. Roby must know, that no “concurrent circumstances” can invest it with divinity. Mr. Roby is particularly successful in stating and proving the necessity of divine revelation to inform and convince mankind of the existence of God. The following is part of a lucid and satisfactory course of reasoning on this subject, in the lecture on the source of religious belief:—

“ The supposed possibility of reason’s rising up from the works of nature to nature’s God, without any previous instruction from divine revelation, is liable to many unanswerable objections. In the first place, it assumes the existing habit of reasoning from effect to cause: but even this is derived from instruction. Besides, it takes for granted, what was to have been independently discovered and proved; that the universe is an effect. This is not self-evident. The heathen philosophers, so far from admitting it, generally maintained that the *matter*, and some even imagined that the *form* of the world was eternal. Instead of inferring from the works of creation the existence of a Supreme Being, many have attributed the supremacy to them; substituting parts of the visible universe for God himself.

“ But allowing that the universe is an effect, the argument deducible for the existence of a Supreme Being would still be incomplete; for, on the same principle, it might be pleaded, if the world is the effect of a cause, that cause may possibly be the effect of a preceding cause; and that, again, of one still more remote, and so on. This kind of reasoning, you perceive, would lead to an infinite succession of causes; but not to the certain evidence of a *first* and *uncaused* cause. It is equally incapable of proving with certainty the existence of *only one* supreme cause; for the harmony observable in the works of creation affords no positive evidence of more than harmony of *design*, which may exist among numerous agents. From the state of the universe, considered as an effect, it is possible to infer even the existence of two opposite causes, good and evil: and this is in fact the inference which Plutarch, among the Greeks, the Persian Magi, the Gnostics, and Manicheans, deduced from a perception of the good and the evil effects which exist in the world.

“ Considering these wanderings of the human mind in the mazes and perplexity of uncertainty, this manifest insufficiency of human reason to discover the being of God, we are driven to the conclusion that the idea must have been derived from testimony, and ultimately from the indisputable testimony of Jehovah himself.” p. 52—54.

The above quotation will afford our readers a fair sample of the more argumentative parts of the work: and for their judgment of those portions of it, in which nothing was required beyond a clear and an orderly statement of admitted and important facts, let them take the following, from the lecture on the christian dispensation:

“ It is distinguished by its *simplicity*. Observe the first christian churches, as they are exhibited in the New Testament! How simple was their constitution! They were not a complex body, established and regulated by civil authority; but single societies, composed of those who, having received the christian truth, in the love of it, agreed to assemble together in one place, to observe the commandments and ordinances of Christ on the christian sabbath. How simple too was their New Testament ritual; their public religious service! They had no prescribed liturgy, or pompous form of worship: prayer and praise, reading and expounding the scriptures, without any restricted modes, were the several parts of worship in which they engaged. The only positive institutions, for stated and general observance among them, were simply baptism with water, by which individuals were visibly dedicated to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and the Lord’s supper, or the mutual participation of bread and wine, by which they commemorated the death of Christ, who gave his flesh for the life of the world. They had no numerous classes of officers to support, but simply bishops, or overseers, sometimes called elders, pastors, rulers, &c. appointed to minister in spiritual things; and deacons to manage their temporal concerns. They had no varying creeds imposed by human authority; but were governed simply and purely by the dictates of inspired, apostolic direction.” p. 291, 292.

Mr. Roby’s numerous positions are supported by a firm and constant appeal to scripture; and, as the title expresses, “select references are made to some of the most valuable treatises on each subject.”

Elementary Discourses, or Sermons addressed to Children. By John Burder, M. A. London: sold by Black, Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen, Leaden-hall-street. 12mo. pp. 231. 4s.

THE early Puritans and Nonconformists were, perhaps, more remarkable for the care which they took of their own children and servants, than the Dissenters of the present age, though we are far from insinuating that the latter neglect this important duty. But in exertion for the eternal interests of the rising generation in general, we cannot say that “the former days were better than these.” This augurs well for the future age; and we trust that the time is approaching, when all our youth will be

able to read, and many more of them than at present led to love the Bible. Assistance in carrying on the important work of early instruction pours in upon us from every quarter; and while we feel ourselves deeply indebted to all who take part in this honourable employment, from the authors of "Nursery Rhymes," to the author of "Elementary Discourses to Children," we regret that we are utterly unable to notice the greater part of what appears, or to do any thing like justice even to those that we introduce into our pages.

The volume now before us, we think admirably adapted to its design. The subjects are as follow:—"Children invited to receive Instruction.—The kindness of Parents, and the kindness of God.—Good Company recommended.—The all-knowing God.—The Sufferings of Christ.—The Character of Samuel.—Love to God.—Love to Mankind.—The Gospel.—Children crying Hosanna."

All, and especially those who preach, will admit, that it is no easy matter to make discourses for children. It requires a talent of a very peculiar nature, to be able to combine what is solid with what is pleasing, what is fitted to improve the understanding and the heart, with what is calculated to engage the fancy; to maintain the requisite simplicity and plainness which the juvenile hearer requires; and to avoid every thing low and debasing in sentiment and style. These are attainments which do not fall to the lot of every minister, or even of every professed instructor of youth. In justice to Mr. Burder, we must say that we think his subjects are well-chosen and judiciously treated. They are all exceedingly important; and are managed in so unaffectedly simple and artless a manner, as must fit them for very extensive usefulness.

Some people imagine that children are incapable of being taught any thing in religion, but to obey their parents, to tell the truth, and to keep the sabbath. We are glad to find Mr. Burder of different sentiments, and that he considers children capable of being taught those great and important truths, which, as they are necessary to be known in order to salvation, so, in the revelation of mercy, they are so clearly stated, that even a little child may understand them. In the ninth sermon, "The Gospel," Mr. Burder states, with much felicity and correctness, those blessed truths which constitute the sum of the gospel, and render it worthy of its distinguishing appellation, "good tidings." The following paragraph we select from this discourse, as a specimen of the general style and sentiment of the volume.

"In the text, we are told for what purpose Jesus came into the world; it was, to save sinners. Hearing of salvation makes us think of danger, for salvation means bringing people out of danger. When we read that Christ Jesus came to save sinners, we learn that sinners were in danger. So that, in this part of the sermon, two things are to be thought of: one is, the danger sinners are in; and the other, how Christ saves them.

"1. We are to think of the danger sinners are in. They are in danger of being for ever miserable. The Bible calls the place where sinners go, 'a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone'; and declares that 'there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.' Suppose you were to see a deep pit at the bottom of a steep hill, and people sliding down the hill, and falling into the pit one after another. That might help you to understand the danger sinners are in. Who ever lives in wickedness is sliding down the hill; and who ever dies in wickedness falls into the pit. But let us,

"2. Think of the way in which Christ saves sinners. This is what he came down from heaven to do; for it is said in the text, that 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'; and in another part of the Bible, that 'the Son of Man' (which means Jesus Christ) came to seek and to save that which was lost.' That you may understand in what way Jesus saves sinners, it is necessary for you to know what it is that makes sinners in danger. Why is a man in danger who is in jail, and is going to be tried? Because he has been wicked. If he has done nothing wrong, he need not be afraid; for when he is tried, he will be acquitted, and set free. But he has done something very bad, and he knows it, and this fills him with fear. In like manner, it is our sinfulness which has brought us into danger. Had there been no sin in the world, there would have been no pain; and if we were not sinners, there would be no danger of our being miserable in the world to come. But we are sinners, and that makes the danger of our falling, when we die, into the pit of destruction. The reason is, because God is angry with us for our sins. It is said in the Bible, (Rom. vi. 23,) that 'the wages of sin is death.' A man who works, has wages paid to him according to the work he has done. Sin is bad work, and the wages are according to it, namely, death; that is, not the death of the body only, but the death of the soul, called in the Bible, *the second death*, which means, everlasting pain.

"Now, children, you may see in what manner sinners are to be saved; if they are to be saved at all, it must be by having their sin taken away. Therefore it is that Jesus is called 'The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' Jesus the Son of God died in the place of sinners. The apostle Peter declares, (1 Pet. iii. 18,) that 'Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' That verse tells us how sinners are saved by Jesus Christ. He is the just one, and we are the unjust. He is good, and we are sinful. We deserve to die, because we are sinful. But Jesus suffered for our sins; he died for us; and the end was that he might bring us

to God. To be far off from God is to be miserable ; being near to God is being happy. Had not Jesus died for us, we must have been for ever far off from God in the place of torment ; but since he died for us, we may be brought near to God. To have our sins pardoned, and to be brought near to God, are much the same. When a child is very unruly and disobedient, his father says to him, ' While you behave in that manner, you shall not come near me. To show how angry I am with you for your wickedness, I give orders that you keep in another part of the house as long as I think proper.' Thus, because we have been disobedient to our Father who is in heaven, we deserve to be for ever kept out of heaven where he is. But Jesus died for us, to bring us to God. If we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sins for his sake. Then we are received into his favour. He smiles upon us, and allows us in our thoughts and our prayers to come near to himself as our father. He also comes near to us as to his children, bringing his word to

our minds so pleasantly, that we seem to hear our heavenly Father speaking to us. This is truly delightful ; but the best of all is, that when we die, we shall be taken to live with our Father in heaven, instead of dwelling with the devil and his angels. All this happiness is brought to us by Jesus Christ, and in this way he saves sinners." p. 180—193.

We hope this is not the last production of the kind with which we shall be favoured by Mr. Burder ; but that, imitating the example, and encouraged by the success, of his worthy father, he will add one volume to another, till the discourses to children shall be as numerous and as useful as the "Village Sermons." We, therefore, recommend most cordially this small but valuable work to the heads of families, conductors of boarding-schools, and teachers of youth, as an important addition to their apparatus of juvenile instruction.

## LITERARY INFORMATION, EXTRACTS FROM SCARCE BOOKS, ANECDOTES, &c. &c.

### *Present State of the Monastery of La Trappe.*

THE following account of this religious house, celebrated in more ancient times by the residence of the learned but licentious Abelard ; and in more modern, by the singular reformation and self-devotion of M. de Rancé, is extracted from the recent work of Mr. Fellowes's.

" The situation of this monastery was well adapted to the founder's views, and to suggest the name it originally received of *La Trappe*, from the intricacy of the road which descends to it, and the difficulty of access or egress, which exists even to this day, though the woods have been very much thinned since the revolution. Perhaps there never was any thing in the whole universe better calculated to inspire religious awe, than the first view of this monastery. It was imposing even to breathlessness. The total solitude, the undisturbed and chilling silence, which seem to have ever slept over the dark and ancient woods ; the still lakes, reflecting the deep solemnity of the objects around them ; — all impress a powerful image of utter seclusion and hopeless separation from living man, and appear formed at once to court and gratify the sternest austerities of devotion, — to nurse the fanaticism of diseased imaginations, — to humour the wildest fancies, and promote the gloomiest schemes of penance and privation !

" In ascending the steep and intricate path, the traveller frequently loses sight of the abbey, until he has actually

reached the bottom ; then emerging from the wood, the following inscription is seen carved on a wooden cross :

' C'est ici que la mort et que la vérité  
Elèvent leurs flambeaux terribles ;  
C'est de cette demeure au monde inaccessible,  
Que l'on passe à l'éternité.'

" A venerable grove of oak trees, which formerly surrounded the monastery, was cut down in the revolution. In the gateway of the outer court is a statue of Saint Bernard, which has been mutilated by the republicans ; he is holding in one hand a church, and in the other a spade, — the emblems of devotion and labour. This gateway leads into a court, which opens into a second enclosure, and around that are the granaries, stables, bakehouse, and other offices necessary to the abbey, which have all been happily preserved.

" On entering the gate, a lay brother received me on his knees ; and in a low and whispering voice, informed me they were at vespers. The stillness and gloom of the building, — the last rays of the sun scarcely penetrating through its windows, — the deep tones of the monks chaunting the responses, which occasionally broke the silence, filled me with reverential emotions, which I was unwilling to disturb. It was necessary, however, to present my letter of introduction ; and Frère Charle, the secrétaire, soon after came out and received me with great civility. He requested, that, in going over the convent, I would neither speak nor ask him any questions in those places where I saw him kneel, or in the

presence of any of the monks. I followed him to the chapel, where, as soon as the service was over, the bell rung to summon them for supper. Ranged in double rows, with their heads enveloped in a large cowl, and bent down to the earth, they chanted the grace, and then seated themselves. During the repast, one of them, standing, read passages from scripture, reminding them of death, and of the shortness of human existence; another went round the whole community, and on his knees kissed their feet in succession, throwing himself prostrate on the floor at intervals, before the image of our Saviour; a third remained on his knees the whole time, and in that attitude took his repast. These penitents had committed some fault, or neglected their religious duties, of which, according to the regulations, they had accused themselves, and were in consequence doomed to the above modes of penance. The refectory was furnished with long wooden tables and benches; each person was provided with a trencher, a jug of water, and a cup, having on it the name of the brother to whom it was appropriated, as Frère Paul, Frère Francois, &c. which name they assume on taking the vow. Their supper consisted of bread soaked in water, a little salt, two raw carrots, placed by each; water alone is their beverage. The dinner is varied with a little cabbage or other vegetables; they very rarely have cheese, and never meat, fish, or eggs. The bread is of the coarsest kind possible. Their bed is a small truckle, boarded, with a single covering, generally a blanket, no mattress nor pillow; and, as in the former time, no fire is allowed, but one in the great hall, which they never approach.

"The hardships undergone by these monks appear almost insupportable to human nature. Their mode of life and regulations exist nearly in the same state as established by the founder. In reciting them, such horrible perversions of human nature and reason, make it almost difficult to believe the existence of so severe an order, and lead us to wonder at the artificial miseries, which the ingenuity of pious but morbid enthusiasm can inflict upon itself. The abstinence practised at La Trappe allows not the use of meat, fish, eggs, nor butter; and a very limited quantity of bread and vegetables. They eat only twice a day; which meals consist of a slender repast at about eleven in the morning, and two ounces of bread and two raw carrots in the evening: both together do not at any time exceed twelve ounces. The same spirit of mortification is observed in their cells, which are very small, and have no other

furniture than a bed of boards, a human skull, and a few religious books.

"Silence is at all times rigidly maintained: conversation is never permitted. Should two of them ever be seen standing near each other, though pursuing their daily labour, and preserving the strictest silence, it is considered as a violation of their vow, and highly criminal: each member is therefore as completely insulated, as if he alone existed in the monastery. None but the Père Abbé knows the name, age, rank, or even the native country of any member of the community. Every one at his first entrance assumes another name, and with his former appellation, each is supposed to abjure, not only the world, but every recollection and memorial of himself and his connexions. No word ever escapes from his lips, by which the others can possibly guess who he is, or where he comes from; and persons of the same name, family, and neighbourhood, have often lived together in the convent for years, unknown to each other, without having suspected the proximity."

#### *Anecdote of Howard.*

MR. HOWARD, when at Prague, was invited, by some Capuchin *bon-vivans*, to take dinner at their convent. On reaching this convent, he found the holy fathers at dinner round a table, which, though it was meagre day with them, was sumptuously furnished with all the delicacies the season could afford, of which he was very kindly invited to partake. This, however, he not only declined to do, but accompanied his refusal by a pretty severe lecture to the elder monks, in which he told them, that he thought they had retired from the world to live a life of abstemiousness and prayer; but he found, on the reverse, that their monastery was a house of revelling and drunkenness. He added, moreover, that he was going to Rome, and he would take care that the Pope should be made acquainted with the impropriety of their conduct.

*Brown's Life of Howard.*

#### *Jephtha's Vow.*

"This brave barbarian, an illegitimate child, and without inheritance, who had from his youth been a robber, and was now, from being the leader of banditti, transformed into a general, had vowed, if he conquered the Ammonites, to make a burnt-offering to the Lord of whatever should first come out of his house to meet him, on his return. This vow was so absurd, and, at the same time, so contrary to the Mosaic law, that it could not possibly have been accepted of God, or obligatory. For, what if a dog or an

ass had first met him? Could he have offered it? By the law of Moses, no unclean beast could be brought to the altar; nor yet even all clean ones; but of quadrupeds, only oxen, sheep, and goats. Or, what if a man had first met him? Human sacrifices Moses had most rigidly prohibited, and described as the abomination of the Canaanites; of which we shall afterwards say more, under criminal law: but Jephtha, who had early been driven from his home, and had grown up to manhood among banditti in the land of Job, might not know much of the laws of Moses, and, probably, was but a bad lawyer, and just as bad a theologian. The neighbouring nations used human sacrifices: the Canaanites especially, are, by Moses and the other sacred writers, often accused of this abominable idolatry, of which we find still more in the Greek and Latin authors; and possibly, therefore, Jephtha, when he made the vow, may have thought of being met not merely by a beast, but by a slave, whom, of course, he would sacrifice, after the heathen fashion. His words are, ' If thou givest the Ammonites into my hands, whatever first cometh forth from my house to meet me, on my happy return from the Ammonites, shall be the Lord's, and I will bring it to him as a burnt-offering.' Most unfortunately, his only daughter first came out to congratulate him; and the ignorant barbarian, though extremely affected at the sight, was yet so superstitious, and so unacquainted with the religion and laws of his country, as to suppose he could not recall his vow. His daughter, too, was heroic enough to fulfil it, on her part; requesting only two months' respite, for the romantic purpose of going with her companions into lonely dales, there to lament that she must die a virgin. Then, after two months' absence, this hapless maid, who, either from ambition or superstition, was a willing victim to her father's inconsiderate vow, actually returned; and Jephtha, it is said, did with her as he had vowed,—which cannot well mean any thing else, than that he put her to death, and burnt her body as a burnt-offering. The greater number of expositors, indeed, would fain explain the passage differently, because they look upon Jephtha as a saint, who could not have done any thing so abominable. ' Human sacrifices, say they, ' are clearly contrary to the law of Moses.' Very true. But how many things have ignorance and superstition done in the world, that expressly contradict the law of God? Have we not, among christians, seen persecutions and massacres on account of religion,

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with various other atrocities and abominable proceedings; that are just as directly repugnant to the gospel as any human sacrifice could be to the laws of Moses? ' But would the high priest have accepted such an offering, and brought it to the altar?' I certainly believe not; but we find not a word spoken of the high-priest, but only of Jephtha. What if he had performed the sacrifice himself? This would certainly have been a transgression of the Levitical law, which enjoined, that every offering should be made by the hand of the priest, and at the place where the tabernacle and altar stood. But that injunction had, on numberless occasions, been violated by the Israelites; and had, by the opposite usage, become almost abrogated. Jephtha, who, from superstitious ignorance, was, in the sacrifice of his daughter, after the Canaanitish fashion, about to perpetrate a most abominable act, forbidden not only by the law of his country, but also by the law of nature, might very well have been guilty of the lesser fault, now actually a very common one, of making his offering in the country beyond Jordan, of which he was himself master.

" Amidst all the doubts that we start concerning this clearly related story, we do not consider *who* Jephtha was; a fugitive from his country, who, in foreign lands, had collected and headed a band of robbers; nor yet *where* he now ruled, —beyond Jordan, in the land of Gilead. And a still more important circumstance mentioned in the chapter (xii.) immediately following our story, has been most inadvertently overlooked.

" Immediately after his victory over the Ammonites, Jephtha went to war with the tribe of Ephraim: but the tabernacle was at Shiloh, within the limits of that tribe: and the high-priest, therefore, could certainly have had no concern with an offering that Jephtha meant to make on account of his success, nor would it have been brought to the altar at Shiloh, but made in the land where Jephtha himself ruled. It is unaccountable, that not a single expositor should have attended to this war with the Ephraimites: but that the one half of them should be so simple as to deny, that Jephtha did offer up his daughter, because the high-priest would not have accepted the offering; and the other, in other respects more correct in their opinion, so obliging, as to obviate that objection, by presuming that the high-priest must have been deposed, for making such an offering." MICHAELIS.

*Biblical Queries.*

MR. EDITOR;—I am encouraged by

the hope of gaining an answer through your excellent publication, to inquire how I am to reconcile the discrepancy apparent in the 9th chapter of the book of Exodus.

In the 6th verse, it is said, "And ALL the cattle of Egypt died."

In the 9th, (a subsequent judgment,) it is recorded, that the dust of the land became "a boil, breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast."

In the 19th, (a still subsequent curse,) the cattle were ordered from the field, and those not housed were smitten by the tremendous hail which, in the 25th verse, is said to have smitten both man and beast.

Now, in the 3rd verse, the cattle are enumerated, — horses, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep; all of which, in the 6th verse, are declared to have died. How, then, are the 9th and 19th verses to be understood? A reply will much oblige.

M.

In the book of Daniel, it is stated, that, in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it, and took it, carrying many of its inhabitants away captive. Of these he selected some to be instructed in the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans; and appointed them "a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank;" "so nourishing them three years, that, at the end thereof, they might stand before the king." Among these were, of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

"Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king."

The second chapter of the book of Daniel begins thus:—

"And, in the SECOND year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

"Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came, and stood before the king," &c. &c.

Permit me to request the favour of some one of the many intelligent readers of the Christian Instructor, to aid me to understand what appears to me difficult to reconcile, as the narration appears in the scriptures. If Nebuchadnezzar took

Daniel away from Jerusalem, when he came to besiege it in the third year of Jehoiakim; and if Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs, fed Daniel and his companions for three years, while they received that instruction which was to fit them to "stand before the king;" and if, at the end of the appointed time, they were brought in, and being, on trial, approved, and that "therefore stood they before the king;" how is it to be understood, that, in the second year of the reign of the king, when he commanded all the wise men of Babylon to be slain, that they sought Daniel and his fellows, to be slain? seeing that Daniel could not, at that time, be reckoned among the wise men of Babylon, being only in his pupilage for three years; and yet, it further appears, that, on declaring and interpreting the dream, in the second year of the king, he made Daniel a great man, ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon, though it was only at the end of the appointed time that they were presented, (as I suppose, at the termination of the three years,) and that "therefore stood they before the king;" as declared in the 19th verse of the 1st chapter.

M.

To the Editors.

De Sacy's and Martini's Translations of the New Testament.

I beg leave to thank your correspondent M. for introducing to your notice the dangerous error contained in De Sacy's and Martini's translations of the New Testament, in your interesting Magazine of January last. There is another error which appears to me equally dangerous with that which your intelligent correspondent points out, it is this in De Sacy's translation; the word penitence, which admits of no other meaning than penance, is used every where for the word repentance in our excellent English version: for instance; Mark 1-4, *Jean étoit dans le désert, baptisant et prêchant le baptême de PENITENCE, pour la rémission des pêchés*, which literally means, "John was in the wilderness, baptizing, and preaching the baptism of PENANCE for the remission of sins." I know not whether the same error exists in Martini's translation, not having a copy of it. I should feel particularly obliged by any of your correspondents informing me whether it is scripturally right to circulate such erroneous translations of the word of God. I am sure you will not deem these remarks as in any wise hostile to that invaluable institution, the British and

Foreign Bible Society, but it really appears to me, Sir, to be an imperative duty on every friend to the circulation of the Bible, to scrutinize with a jealous eye every translation of that sacred book, which is the alone charter of our

salvation.—Query: ought not the British and Foreign Bible Society to have a separate fund for the printing of the translations of the vulgate, as many may not wish to contribute to its publication.

E.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### I. STATISTICAL VIEW OF DISSENTERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Wishing to make this department of our work as complete as possible, we earnestly beg our correspondents to furnish us with all documents and information relating to it, addressed to the Editors, at the Publisher's.

#### CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

(Continued from page 317.)

**BAPTIST CHURCH AT CAMBRIDGE.**—No memorials of the earlier history of the churches of this denomination in Cambridgeshire have been preserved.—In 1689 and 1692, there appears to have been a Baptist church at Cambridge, from which Mr. THOMAS COWHIGE was deputed to attend the general assemblies in London. Of their place of meeting we have no account.

It has already been stated, that, after Mr. Hussey's departure from Hog-Hill, a division took place in the congregation; the greater but poorer part of which chose Mr. DAVIS as their pastor, and were compelled to seek another place of worship. On Monday, March 27, 1721, these persons hired a stable and granary in St. Andrew's parish, called *Stone Yard*, of Mr. Holstead, for twelve years, and fitted it up; and, on April 26, 1721, Mr. Davis first preached there. Here they formed themselves into a congregational church; renewed covenant; received Mr. Davis into their fellowship by a letter of dismission from the church of Higham Ferrers; and, in July, 1721, he was settled in the pastoral office over them. His ministry was acceptable and useful, the church increasing to 133 members, and every thing appeared well till July, 1732, when some unfortunate circumstance split them into two parties: two-thirds resolving to remove Mr. Davis from his office, and refusing him communion, but agreeing to offer him a small pecuniary compensation for removing before Christmas; and one third voting to restore and continue him. The latter, being unable to carry their point, seceded, and fitted up a place at Barnwell, which was opened the 1st of December, 1723.—“The church at *Stone Yard*, consisting of eighty-eight members,” says Robinson, “proceeded to chuse a minister, and the Baptists, who were upwards of fifty, proposed a Baptist minister, and for the future a strict com-

munion. This, as may well be imagined, was disputed with great warmth. The Baptists had the majority, and so their vote was respectable.” They first voted a strict communion; but were induced afterwards, from motives of prudence, to accede to an open communion, and, in fact, to leave the management of the church to the *Pædobaptist* members; by whom, on July 15, 1725, Mr. SEWELL was chosen pastor. The Baptists, in the spring of the following year, disliking Mr. Sewell's preaching, who was an old man, withdrew, and hired a building, called *Millar's Barn*, in St. Andrew's; registered it on the 8th of April, and on the 16th, Mr. JOHN RUTHORN, of Wisbeach, preached in it for the first time. In July, Mr. ANDREW HARPER was called to minister among them, and continued from July, 1726, to May, 1727, at which time, Mr. Sewell, being a man of fortune, and perceiving his congregation decrease, resigned his charge. After his departure, the people offered to chuse Mr. Harper, and to unite his congregation with themselves, at *Stone Yard* Meeting, on condition of their granting a mixed communion. To this, after warm debates, the majority agreed, and removed to *Stone Yard*, November, 1727. The Baptists, when they had regained possession of *Stone Yard*, could not resist the temptation to endeavour again to carry their favourite point of strict communion, notwithstanding their previous agreement with the *Pædobaptists*. The disputes to which this gave rise were not always, says Robinson, to the praise of religion, and ran so high that Mr. Harper was not even permitted to preach on the subject of adult baptism, or to administer it in public till August 16, 1730, when a vote passed that he might do both as occasion offered; and he did so accordingly, ten days afterwards, at *Fulborne*, a place about five miles from Cambridge, then in connexion with the Baptist church at *Stone Yard*. Mr. Harper's church consisted only, at first, of

twenty-one members, but greatly increased under his ministry. "He was," says Robinson, "a man of no learning, nor were his natural abilities remarkably bright, but his ministry was rendered exceedingly useful to many. It was neither a dry morality, nor a scholastic subtlety, but a scriptural appeal to the reason and sense of mankind. His people loved him while he lived, remember him with gratitude since his death, and retain a savour of his services to this day," (1774.) He died the 16th of March, 1741; and the church was supplied by neighbouring ministers, till November 13, 1743; when Mr. G. SIMSON, A. M. the pastor of the church at Floor, in Northamptonshire, preached to them by their desire, and was called to the pastoral office, July 14, 1745. The Baptists now having a majority, and a minister who favoured strict communion, again proposed that *darling theme*, and passed a decree *not to displace the *P*ædo-baptist members, but to admit for the future none but such as were baptized by immersion*. Under Mr. Simson, of whom Robinson has given a very unfavourable portrait, the church declined so rapidly, that the meeting house was at length shut up, and the people scattered. After some time, it being recommended to the church, by some neighbouring ministers, to make another effort to maintain themselves, in church fellowship, under a pastor, they had several meetings with fasting and prayer, but obtained only occasional supplies of preachers, till the spring of 1759, when, ROBERT ROBINSON, who had been preaching, three years, among the Methodists at Norwich, was invited. He was then twenty-three years of age, had recently been baptized, and was desirous to settle with a protestant dissenting congregation, particularly among the Baptists: On July 8, 1759, he preached at Stone Yard for the first time, the church consisting of thirty-four members, so poor, that all they could possibly propose to raise him was 3*l.* 6*s.* per quarter: after a probation of two years, and the adjustment of several preliminary matters, particularly respecting open communion, for which Robinson stipulated most resolutely, on June 11, 1761, he accepted the call of the church, and was ordained pastor over them. Under him they flourished greatly, and increased in numbers. Their meeting-house, which had been originally only a barn, and though fitted up with pews and galleries, could still afford but little even of decent accommodation to the worshippers, was also rebuilt at their own expense: the congregation now including some individuals possessed of affluence, by whom the old place and ground

were first purchased of Alderman Alstead, for 70*l.* The new meeting-house cost 500 guineas, and was opened August 12, 1764.

Mr. Robinson's talents, as a preacher, were soon noticed by persons of consideration in Cambridge. His pulpit productions consisted of what have been contemptuously called (by those who consider *preaching* to consist in "*reading what they never wrote*") extemporaneous effusions: but he did not deliver unpremeditated discourses; and as he early took to the practice of itinerancy, he acquired by study, united with the constant exercise of preaching, abundance of materials, and a facility, both in arrangement, and delivery, which may well account for the great degree of popularity he ultimately attained. One of his biographers has stated, that "at the desire of the gown and town, he set up a Lord's day evening lecture, which was crowded, and it was supposed that not less than one hundred and fifty, or two hundred gownsmen, from different motives, generally attended it. This statement has been considered as greatly exaggerated, though Robinson certainly had many gownsmen among his hearers. In his early career, however, he did not escape the opposition and insult to which the cause of truth, as maintained by non-conformists, has ever been exposed in the *seats of learning*. For the existence of this evil, which he attempted to remove, but ineffectually, by complaints to the vice-chancellor, we are indebted for his celebrated sermon upon "*a becoming behaviour in religious assemblies*." It has been called "a most complete piece of argument, genteel satire, and christian oratory." His itinerant labours extended, when he was in his youth, to fifteen villages, each of them distant from Cambridge somewhere between two and ten miles: some he supplied stately, others occasionally. But he served the cause of religion not less by his pen, than by his discourses from the pulpit. The following list contains the chief, if not the whole of his printed works: Translation of Saurin's Sermons, eight volumes, 8vo., with prefaces by Robinson to each volume; History of Baptism, one volume, 4to.; M. Claude's, Essay on the Composition of a Sermon, with extensive notes, and a preface, by Robinson, 8vo.; his Village Sermons; Plan of Lectures on Non-Conformity; History and Mystery of Good Friday; General Doctrine of Toleration, applied to the Particular Case of Free Communion. His miscellaneous works have been published since his death, in four volumes, 8vo. with a memoir prefixed by B. Flower, who has since added a volume of posthumous works. Mr. Ro-

binson died in June, 1790, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, while on a visit in the neighbourhood of Birmingham, and was interred in the ground attached to Dr. Priestley's meeting-house. He had been upwards of thirty-one years pastor of the Baptist church, at Cambridge, in which office he was succeeded by the Rev. ROBERT HALL, M. A. now of Leicester, and formerly tutor of Bristol academy. Of this gentleman it is altogether unnecessary to say more, than that in the choice of him the congregation "fulfilled the wishes of the best friends to the respectability of the Dissenters." He quitted Cambridge in November, 1805, and was succeeded in July, 1806, by F. A. COX, M. A. who resigned the charge, in April, 1808, that he might come to London. He was succeeded by the Rev. SAMUEL CHASE, who commenced his labours about midsummer, 1808, and relinquished them in the spring of 1809. The Rev. THOMAS EDMONDS was ordained pastor early in 1810, and continues to fill that office.

It has been already incidentally mentioned, that, besides the places, of which the history has been briefly given, erected or fitted up in Cambridge for the special purpose of the worship of God by non-conformists, there were six private houses registered for the same purpose, immediately after the passing of the act of 1st William and Mary. There also appear to have been three small separate congregations, of whose history nothing is now known, except that they had a temporary existence. It is therefore probable, that, after a time, they merged in the larger societies. They all appear to have been derived from Mr. Hussey's church. The first of this description was that mentioned by Robinson, to have been under the direction of a contemporary of Mr. Hussey, named RICHARD DAVIS, a Welshman, and reputed Antinomian,\* who was afterwards pastor of a church at Rothwell, in Northamptonshire, where he distinguished himself by his publications: the second, the congregation which assembled in the meeting-house in Sparrow's lane, which was opened in 1735 by the friends of Mr. DADLY, who afterwards removed to Gamlingay: the third was that which assembled in a place fitted up for them at Barnwell, and opened Dec. 1, 1723, by another Mr. DAVIS, in consequence of his expulsion from Stone-yard. We also learn from the Non-conformists' Memorial, vol. i. p. 208, that Mr. WILLIAM GREEN, M. A. Fellow of Katharine-hall, a learned, grave, and holy man, after his ejectionment,

preached privately in and about Cambridge.

About the year 1801, a *benevolent society*, for the relief of the sick and aged poor at their own habitations, was formed in the town of Cambridge, chiefly by the exertions of Mrs. FLOWER, the wife of Mr. B. Flower, a Dissenter, who then resided in Cambridge. This lady has been always regarded as the foundress of the Benevolent Society, in which she, for several years, acted as secretary and visiter; and, by her persevering efforts, so greatly extended its usefulness, as to obtain for it the support of all parties, Churchmen and Dissenters. Its funds consist of donations and subscriptions, and the collection at a sermon annually preached for it; sometimes in a church, and at others in a meeting-house.

There are several other benevolent institutions, towards the support of which the Dissenters in Cambridge contribute; but as these extend their operations to other parts of the county, they will be noticed hereafter.

BARRINGTON and GREAT EVERSDEN. It is probable that the ancient Independent united church in these adjoining parishes was among the first formed by Mr. Holcroft; and that the materials of which it was composed were in existence before the year 1662, when he assembled his people at *Great Eversden*, for the purpose of electing elders to assist him in the work of the ministry. Here they chose Mr. JOSEPH ODDY, Mr. S. CORBYN, Mr. J. WAITE, and Mr. BARD, who all laboured in the work with him, till the next year, 1663, when Mr. Holcroft himself was imprisoned in Cambridge Castle, by Sir Thomas Chickley, for preaching at *Great Eversden*; and his colleagues, very soon afterwards, for preaching in different places. In 1680, liberty of conscience being settled by law, the church of Barrington and Great Eversden was re-assembled by Mr. Holcroft; and, some time after his death in 1691, Mr. THOMAS JENNINGS was ordained pastor over it. He is stated to have been a godly, zealous, and useful minister of Christ. He laboured in this part of his Lord's vineyard for nearly half a century. In Mr. Hussey's list of the Dissenting congregations in this county, written by him in 1718, Mr. Jennings's appears to have been the second in magnitude, consisting of 800 persons. He died at an advanced age, about the year 1740. The united church then invited Mr. GABELL, who was received into communion with them by dismission from a church in London under Mr. Hall, supposed to be that which assembles on the Pavement, Moorfields, then under Mr. Thomas Hall. Mr. Gaskell died in the year 1748, and was succeeded by Mr. WILLIAM BOND, who

\* See the Censure upon him in *Cambridge*, vol. i. p. 512.

was ordained at Eversden, December 27th, 1750. Doctor Conder preached upon the occasion, from *Thess. iii. 8.* “*For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.*” Mr. Bond appears to have been a truly valuable man. He continued pastor of this church till his death, April 12th, 1794, a period of upwards of forty-three years. He was buried under the meeting-house at Eversden, and a funeral sermon was preached for him by Mr. Audley, of Cambridge. Mr. Bond was the last pastor of the united church of Barrington and Eversden; the members of which, soon after his decease, appear to have been in some perplexity about the course which it would be most proper for them to pursue; and at length resolved, that Barrington and Eversden should each have its own pastor. Thus the two churches became completely distinct.

**BARRINGTON**, since the separation, has been supplied by different ministers. Mr. SKILLETER remained there several months, and after him Mr. WEDGEBOUGH, who continued there nearly two years. In 1798, Mr. WILLIAM RICHARDSON, who had been a student in Hoxton Academy, received an invitation from the church and congregation, and continued with them about three years. They have, from the period of his quitting, been supplied by different persons. During the three years last past, Mr. SPRIGGS, of Cambridge, has preached there every Lord’s-day; but this society, as a separate church, has not yet had a minister ordained over it.

**GREAT EVERSDEN.** — After the decease of Mr. Bond, this church was supplied by several neighbouring ministers, particularly by a Mr. HOWARD, for nine months, and increased considerably. Their next application was to Mr. AIKIN, the itinerant preacher for the county, who, after preaching to them three Lord’s-days, in the month of May, 1796, became their supply for one year; and in May, 1797, entered into a similar engagement for another year. Early in 1798, they invited him to take the pastoral office; and on the 26th of October, he was ordained over them, and continued in his charge till 1804, when he went into Hertfordshire. He died at Cambridge in 1810. After an interval of a few months from Mr. Aikin’s departure, the church invited Mr. JAMES ROBERTSON, a student from Wymondley Academy, who continued with them till 1808, although he was not ordained over them. He then removed to *Stretton under Fosse*, in *Warwickshire*; and was succeeded, in September, 1809, by Mr. JAMES GOLDRING, of Cambridge, who, after performing the pastoral duties, as an occasional preacher, for a year

and eight months, was ordained over the church, the 28th of May, 1811; Messrs. Harris, of Cambridge, Towne, of Ryston, Carver, of Milbourn, and Dobson, of Chiashill, assisting. Mr. Golding’s ministry has been very successful; the church and congregation flourishing greatly under it. There is a good Sunday-school connected with the place of worship.

**BOTTISHAM AND BOTTISHAM LODGE.** — The latter is a hamlet belonging to the former, and one mile distant from it. About the year 1700, the gospel was introduced into the hamlet of *Bottisham Lode*, under the patronage of a very respectable family of the name of *Fragg*, or *Frocock*, then resident in it. The minister was of the Presbyterian denomination; and, after he had continued to preach for several years, the public worship was discontinued, for what reason we have not been able to ascertain. But in the year 1744, the preaching of the gospel was revived in the village of *Bottisham*, by the exertions of a pious man of the name of *Tolley*, an Independent, who officiated, with great acceptance, in a small meeting-house fitted up for that purpose. The introduction of the gospel into Bottisham, however, excited the hostility of the powers of darkness in a manner, and to an extent, but seldom witnessed. The parish had to supply one man for the military service of the country, and, after due deliberation no doubt, it was determined, by the officers and constituted authorities, that, notwithstanding the exemption afforded by the statute of William and Mary to duly registered teachers, Mr. Tolley was the fittest person for His Majesty’s service; and he was singled out, and sent accordingly, leaving his wife and family in great distress and perplexity. It appears, from an early report of the then infant Society for the protection of the civil rights of Protestant Dissenters, that about this time this mode of persecution was resorted to in some other instances; and that a successful resistance to this malevolent attack was among the earliest services which that Society rendered to the great body of Protestant Dissenters. Mr. Tolley, though almost immediately discharged from military service, did not return to Bottisham, but appears to have held an epistolary correspondence with some of the inhabitants. One original letter from him to a female friend, dated the 22d of July, 1746, is still preserved in the village; the characteristic features of which are described to be, good sense, piety, and affection. His religious sentiments appear, from this letter, to have been Calvinistic.

The congregation, when deprived of

their minister, divided into two parties; the one going to Cambridge, and the other to Burwell. Things continued in this state, till the Rev. JOHN BERRIDGE, the vicar of Everton, commenced *his very uncanonical, itinerant labours in the parishes of his brethren of the established church, for the purpose of preaching the gospel to their parishioners.* His first step was to take possession of the deserted barn in Bottisham Lode, which had formerly been occupied by the Presbyterians; but he very soon afterwards hired, and fitted up at his own cost, a place adapted to afford superior accommodation. Here he and his colleague, Mr. HICKS, with some others, preached occasionally for several years. They at length stationed at Bottisham Lode a Mr. PRICE, who was well received by the people, and very useful among them. He was the father of the present Doctor Price, who, a few years since, was in the University of Cambridge.

About this time, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley occasionally visited and preached at Bottisham.

Sometime before the death of Mr. Berridge, the late Rev. Andrew Fuller, of Kettering, preached several times at Bottisham Lode, and afterwards, once a month at Bottisham, in a farm house in which his father resided. It appears that the dissenting congregations in Bottisham and Bottisham Lode declined after the death of Mr. Berridge, but did not become extinct, a few friends continuing to meet in a private house for social worship, until the year 1800, when Mr. THOMAS REYNOLDS, a Baptist, began publicly to engage in prayer, and expound the scriptures in his own private house at Bottisham Lode.

## II. MISCELLANEOUS.

*Extracts from the Address of the Committee of the Congregational Union in Scotland, to the Congregational Churches in England.*

“ Dear Brethren;

“ We give thanks to God in your behalf, making mention of you in our prayers, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may bestow on you a still greater abundance of his mercy, and make you more and more useful in the kingdom of our common Lord and Saviour.

“ Standing connected with churches that hold the same evangelical doctrines with yourselves, and substantially the same views of the order of Christ’s kingdom,—being well acquainted with the circumstances in which these churches are,—their extensive spheres of usefulness,—and their need of your prayers and co-operation in making known the gospel of the Son of God, and the scrip-

His labours proving acceptable and useful to many, and his house too small to receive those who were desirous to be his hearers, he removed to a large room on the premises, where the Presbyterian and Mr. Berridge had successively preached. This also proving too small, a meeting house has since been erected, which was opened on the 9th of August, 1810. A church was formed in the following year on the congregational plan, of which some of the members have been publicly baptized, and on the 16th of July, 1817, Mr. Reynolds was publicly set apart over the church and congregation. The former is small, consisting of fourteen members, but it is increasing. The latter is now numerous; and there is a Sunday school of 37 children connected with the place of worship.

The meeting-house at Bottisham is the private property of Mr. Thomas Dennis, of Great Wilbraham, and consists of part of a large barn; it will hold about 200 persons, and has been used occasionally for a place of worship, for about twenty-two years. In December, 1812, Mr. RICHARD KENT, of Little Wilbraham, began his labours here by expounding, and occasionally speaking for a short time from passages of scripture, once in the week, and on the evenings of the Lord’s day. This he continued till April, 1814, when he undertook to conduct the worship on both the morning and afternoon of the sabbath day. The congregation has not yet formed itself into a church, but the number of hearers has greatly increased lately, amounting, in the afternoon, to from 150 to 200 persons.

(To be continued.)

tural nature of his kingdom on earth; we consider ourselves called upon to lay before you a brief view of our situation in this northern part of the kingdom.

“ Many parts of Scotland have been long highly favoured with the divine revelation of mercy,—the Scriptures of truth. But we are deeply convinced that in point of genuine religion, and even in point of religious privileges, the state of this country has been greatly overruled by the friends of evangelical truth on the south of the Tweed; and even by many of the people of God in Scotland, who are the most able to assist in diffusing the true knowledge of the Saviour.

“ It is well known that the ministers of the Church of Scotland are divided into two parties, generally termed the *evangelical* and *moderate* parties. Those of the latter party are not considered

even by their own brethren in the former class, to preach salvation to sinners through the blood and righteousness of Immanuel, in any thing like a scriptural manner: nor is it uncommon in some of them to treat even with ridicule the doctrines of justification by faith without works, and of regeneration by the influences of the Holy Spirit; while repentance, and sincere, though imperfect obedience, are inculcated as the only means of acceptance with God.

" The 900 parishes of Scotland are divided into 78 Presbyteries; and it is a notorious fact, that several of these Presbyteries consist chiefly, and some of them entirely, of the moderate party. What then must be the state of such parts of the country, especially where there are few or no Dissenting ministers? In one extensive county, for instance, containing a population of about 74,000, there are only four Dissenting ministers, who are all in the county-town: and in another county, containing a population of 23,000, there is not in the whole of it one Dissenting minister.

" The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland contain a population of about 400,000; by far the greater part of whom are capable of receiving instruction only in the Gaelic language. Several of the parishes in these districts are *sixty* (computed) miles in length, and from 20 to 40 in breadth; i. e. nearly 100 (English) miles in length, and about 60 in breadth. There is not perhaps among our Gaelic population more than one Dissenting minister to 30,000 or 40,000 souls. And yet oral teaching is indispensably requisite, as the people must otherwise perish in ignorance: for although the Scriptures can now be had in the Gaelic tongue, few comparatively of the people can read. In a pamphlet, published in 1817 by the Society for Circulating Schools in the Highlands, &c. it appears from the returns made by the clergymen of eight parishes, that out of 22,501, - 19,397 were incapable of reading either English or Gaelic. And the pamphlet adds, many other parishes might be mentioned in a state equally destitute.

" We will now take the liberty of laying before you some account of our own denomination; and what we are doing in order to impart the knowledge of the Gospel to those who are destitute of it, in our native land.

" The churches with which we are connected are about *seventy* in number. Except in large towns, the number of their members is comparatively small; but the following facts will show that they highly prize the Gospel, and the ordinances of the Redeemer's kingdom;

that they are anxious to give others an opportunity of hearing the words of eternal life; and that, under the great Head of the church, they certainly are a peculiar blessing to this country.

" Deeply convinced of the vast importance and necessity of a supply of able and faithful men for the work of the ministry, an Academy was instituted for this purpose in the year 1811, in Glasgow, under a committee of management. Those who are received as students into this Institution, are first approved of by the church of which they are members, as young men of very manifest piety and promising abilities. The course of education is equal to that of any body of ministers in Britain. For four or five sessions, the students attend the several classes of the University; and, during the whole term of these years, receive regular instructions from their more immediate tutors, Messrs. Ewing and Wardlaw. Seven have already been sent out from the Academy: four of whom are now ordained pastors, one a missionary in Russia, and two preaching in very important stations in Scotland. Eight are now on the Institution; some of whom are just about to leave it, and enter on the scene of their future labours. The whole expense of board, and college fees, &c. has, up to November last, amounted to 19971. 9s. 2d. while several of the students have wholly supported themselves. The above sum has been raised by collections from the churches, regular subscriptions from some of the more opulent members, and subscriptions and donations from others who are friendly. The only reason why many more have not in this way been brought forward to the work of the ministry, is the want of funds.

" The Congregational Union of Scotland was also formed by the same churches, in the year 1812, the great object of which is, " to afford to the churches and preachers, in the connexion, such pecuniary assistance as may enable them with advantage to promote the interests of the Gospel in their respective neighbourhoods, or in the country at large."

(*To be continued.*)

#### Hoxton Anniversary and Association of Ministers.

On Monday, the 28th of June, the Rev. John Hooper will preach at Hoxton Chapel, before the ministers of the Hoxton Association, on the following subject:—" The best means of preventing the spread of Antinomianism." The service will begin at half-past six o'clock in the evening.

On Tuesday, the 29th of June, the

Annual Examination of the Students will take place at the Academy, at ten o'clock.

On Tuesday evening, at six o'clock, the General Meeting of the Subscribers to Hoxton Academy, will be held at the King's Head Tavern, in the Poultry.

On Wednesday morning, at nine o'clock, the ministers of the Hoxton Association will breakfast together at the King's Head Tavern; and at eleven o'clock, an Essay will be read by the Rev. J. Thornton, on the following subject:—"Whether expounding the Scriptures, with preaching, be more adapted to edification, than preaching only."

On Wednesday evening, at six o'clock, three of the Students will deliver short discourses on theological subjects at Hoxton Chapel.

It is hoped that the ministers of the Hoxton Association will, if compatible with their engagements and convenience, be present on these interesting occasions, and that they will consider this intimation of the proposed arrangements, as a sufficient notice, without receiving a printed circular.

*Port of London Society.*

On Monday evening, May the 10th, the first Anniversary of this Society was held at the City of London Tavern, Bishopsgate-street; Sir John Jackson, Bart. M. P. is the chair.

We are happy to learn, from the Report which was read, that the noble example set by the Honourable East India Company, of which the worthy Chairman is Director, has been followed by the Bank of England, the Parliamentary Commissioners, the Police Magistrates, and many individuals of rank; that the chapel has been regularly favoured with the *gratuitous* services of respectable ministers and students; that several hundreds of seamen have frequently attended public worship; that the instances of feeling under the word are numerous and indubitable; that prayer-meetings among the sailors are no uncommon thing; that a school has been established on board; that some thousands of tracts have been distributed to eager recipients; that much good is most evidently doing; and that masters and mates of ships own there is a visible improvement in the morals and habits of this interesting class of men.

The various resolutions were moved and seconded by the Rev. Messrs. G. Townsend, J. A. Coombs, Morison, Moore, Vowles, Thomas, Edwards, Hyatt, F. A. Cox, Evans, Lacey, Crisp, Harper, and James. R. H. Marten, Esq. was re-elected Treasurer; Rev. N. E. Sloper, with Messrs. Cooke and Thompson, Secretaries; and the crowded assem-

bly departed at a late hour, with feelings of the highest gratification.

*Religious Tract Society.*

On the 13th of May, the Religious Tract Society held its Twentieth Anniversary, at the City of London Tavern. The chair was taken by Joseph Reyner, Esq.; and the meeting was numerously attended: though held at the early hour of six, one thousand and ninety-three friends of this important and interesting institution sat down to breakfast, previously to the commencement of business. Many highly affecting and pleasing instances of usefulness were related, in which the distribution of Tracts had, through the influence of the Divine Spirit, awakened the most profligate characters, and afforded consolation under the most trying circumstances.

The number of Tracts issued by the Society, during the last year, is *four millions, forty-three thousand, three hundred and twenty-one*; of which are 150,000 in the form of broad sheets, for affixing on walls in manufactories, cottages, &c. &c. 351,000 children's books, and upwards of one million of the hawkers' series. The loss on those applied to hawkers, added to the amount of grants for various purposes, both foreign and domestic, in the whole, exceeds *nine hundred pounds*. In addition to this, we much regret to state, that the Society is under engagements, to the amount of *eight hundred pounds*, beyond the sum in the hands of the Treasurer. This simple statement, together with the increasing demands on the Society, will, it is hoped, powerfully appeal to the feelings and principles of individuals and auxiliary societies, and obtain from them renewed and more active assistance.

At the repeated and particular desire of many members and friends of the Society, there will soon appear, in one volume, the reports of its proceedings during the *twenty years* which have elapsed since the commencement of its operations, during which period considerably more than thirty millions of Tracts have issued from its depositaries, independently of pecuniary grants for foreign countries.

The labours of the Society have much increased: the field for its operations now extends to almost every part of the habitable globe. Its silent preachers have penetrated into the hitherto inaccessible regions of the Chinese, and are to be found on the arid plains of Southern America, and Africa, declaring the truths of the gospel, and carrying the glad tidings of salvation where, as yet, the feet of missionaries cannot tread, acting, both at home and abroad, as the pioneers for the labours of other societies.

ties, and declaring to foreign nations, in their own tongues, "the wonderful works of God."

*British and Foreign Bible Society.*

WEDNESDAY, May 5, was held the Fifteenth Anniversary of this Society, at Freemasons' Hall. The room filled rapidly on the doors being opened; and it is supposed, there were not less than 2000 persons present. At twelve o'clock, the Right Hon. Lord TEIGNMOUTH (President) took the chair, and in a short address to the meeting mentioned that the state of his health would have led him to decline the honour of presiding that day; but the indulgence which he had experienced, and the pleasure which he had received at former meetings, had silenced the suggestions of human prudence. He had hoped to have been honoured with the presence of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Harrowby, but they had been detained on a Committee of the House of Lords. The Bishop of Durham could not attend, but desired him to express his best wishes for the Society; and notes of apology had been received from the Bishops of Gloucester and Norwich, the former being engaged in the duties of his diocese, and the latter disabled by his infirmities, but both expressing their attachment to the Society. The note of the latter thus concluded:—"In that hour which is now fast approaching, I am persuaded no reflections will afford me more real joy than my connexion with your Society; reflections far more gratifying, than having written a hundred volumes of angry controversy."

Mr. Deatly then read an abstract of the Report, the whole being judged too long, as containing a comprehensive statement of the proceedings of the Society, in all its domestic and foreign relations and operations, and which, being printed, was delivered to the subscribers, on leaving the meeting. It made a sort of tour through Europe, and through the world, to but few parts of which the Society's exertions have not extended.

It detailed the progress of the Bible Societies in the different countries on the Continent, and in the Indies, &c. stated, that the number of Bibles issued at cost and reduced prices, from the 31st of March, 1818, to the same period in 1819, was 123,247 Bibles, and 136,784 Testaments, making in the whole 260,031 copies, being an increase beyond the issues of the preceding year, of 65,930 Bibles and Testaments; making, with those issued at the expense of the Society, from various presses upon the

Continent, a total of more than two millions three hundred thousand Bibles and Testaments.

The total net receipts of

last year were . . . . 94,306 17 10

*Contra*—Including Auxiliary

Societies . 56,604 3 3

Ditto Bibles,

Tests. &c. 27,499 2 10

Total net payments . . . . 92,237 1 4

Beside which, the Society was under engagements to the amount of 70,000l. more.

It was then moved, by the Lord Bishop of Cloyne, and seconded by Sir William Geary, that the Report be received, which was carried unanimously.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester then proposed the thanks of the meeting to the Right Honourable the President, a motion which he was perfectly convinced would be agreed to without a dissenting voice; and, at the same time, to express the interest which he felt in the concerns of this Institution. From its formation (said he) I have been one of its feeble but constant supporters. The design of this Society is to obey the command of our Saviour, in sending his gospel into all the world, and in making known to those, who are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, that book from which we ourselves must draw all our present happiness and our future hopes. In so good a cause, there could be no doubt of success; but that every year they might expect to hear a more favourable Report. He was not here in time to hear the commencement of the Report; but he was thankful for what he did hear, and expressed his hope, that their exertions, so far from being contracted, would every year increase, and be crowned with more and more success.

Professor Kieffer, of the University of Paris, Interpreter of Oriental Languages to the King of France, then advanced, holding in his hand the first *Turkish New Testament* ever published, presenting three copies of it as the fruits of his own labour, patronised by the British and Foreign Bible Society and the French Government.—In a written address, in the French language, interpreted by the Rev. D. Wilson, the Professor assured his Lordship and the Meeting, that the connexion between England and France became every day more firmly established by means of Benevolent Societies in both countries; the most friendly dispositions are manifested in every class of society; that zeal for religion was not extinct in France, but only waited for a favourable opportunity to break forth; and if the people of France have been rather late in coming forward in this

good cause, he had no doubt they would apply to it with double energy.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester then put the motion of thanks to the Right Honourable the President, which was seconded by Lord Gambier, and carried with great applause. Lord Teignmouth then rose, and made his acknowledgments with all that chasteness of expression, and devoutness of spirit, for which his Lordship is distinguished.

The meeting was then addressed, in very glowing and animated speeches, by W. Wilberforce, Esq. M. P. Lord Gambier, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, John Gurney, Esq. (King's Counsel,) Rev. W. Roby, Charles Grant, Esq. M. P. Chief Secretary for Ireland, the Hon. Charles Shore, (son of Lord Teignmouth,) Sir Montague Cholmeley, Bart., Rev. S. Wood, of Dublin, (in the Methodist connexion,) John Thornton, Esq. Treasurer, D. Morier, Esq. his Majesty's Consul General from France, Rev. W. B. Mathias, of Dublin, Rev. J. Owen, the Hon. and Rev. Gerard Noel, Dr. Macbride, Professor of Arabic in the University of Oxford, and Sir T. Acland, Bart.

#### Gloucestershire Association.

THE spring meeting of the ministers of this Association, was held, at Forest Green, May the 19th. Mr. Jay, of Bath, preached in the morning a most excellent and useful sermon, from Luke xix. 40. which the ministers unanimously and earnestly requested should be published, and it is hoped Mr. Jay will comply. Mr. Bishop, of Gloucester, preached in the evening, from Luke viii. 35. "Sitting at the feet of Jesus." Mr. Burder, of Stroud, preached the preceding evening, from Exodus xxv. 22. Messrs. Baynes, Winterbotham, Burder, and Daniell, conducted the devotional parts of the service. All the services were interesting and profitable, and appeared to have left a salutary impression on the minds of the people.

At the meeting for business, it was much lamented, that so little had been done to promote the spread of the gospel in the unenlightened parts of this large and populous county. It was, therefore, resolved, that a plan should be forthwith drawn up, for raising funds, and supplying the necessary means for furthering this important object. And it is earnestly hoped, that the ministers, and churches of the county in general, will feel disposed to emulate the zeal of their brethren in some other counties, in promoting, to the utmost of their power, the spread of the gospel at home, as well as abroad.

*Shropshire Academical Institution.*  
We understand that the Rev. John Whittington, late of Carlisle, has accepted the Principalship of the Academical Institution, which is to be established immediately in Shropshire.

#### Marriage Laws.

THE General Body of the Ministers of the Three Denominations held a Special Meeting at the Library, Red Cross Street, on the 27th of April last, to take into consideration the expediency of applying to the legislature, for an alteration of the laws relating to Marriage, as far as they affect Protestant Dissenters.

The opinion of the meeting was unanimous as to the impropriety and injustice of the present system, and as the first step, it was resolved, that a deputation, consisting of the Rev. Dr. Lindsay, the Rev. Mark Wilks, the Rev. Dr. Rippon, and the Secretary, should wait on Lord Liverpool, and represent to him the feelings and wishes of the Body, which we are persuaded are those of Dissenters throughout the kingdom, on this subject. We wait with anxiety the result of this interview. In the mean time, we cannot but seize this opportunity of reminding Dissenters at large, that they owe it to their own want of spirit, perseverance, and union, that they have not long since obtained the same liberty as their brethren the Quakers; whose firmness and courage in resisting the imposition of a popish ceremony, we most earnestly beseech them to imitate, and then we feel assured, we shall soon have to congratulate them on a similar issue.

#### London Missionary Society.

On Thursday, May 13, the twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of this Society was held at the Methodist Chapel, Queen-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Rev. G. Burder proposed that W. A. Hankey, Esq. Treasurer to the Society, should take the chair, which he immediately did, and thus addressed the meeting. "What an assembly is here, my friends! for what a noble object are we met! What is wanting on the present occasion, but the presence of the great Master of assemblies to grieve our meeting with love, and peace, and joy! We are directed to acknowledge him, whose servants we are; I shall, therefore, call on the Rev. Mr. Tozer to commence the business of the day, by giving out an hymn." This was done, and the Rev. G. Redford, of Uxbridge, then engaged in prayer.

Rev. G. Burder, assisted by his son, the Rev. H. F. Burder, then read an abstract of the Report of the Directors for the past year.

We are compelled, by our limits, to refrain from attempting any abstract of this Report, but the substance of it will come within our Missionary Epitome. The following gentlemen then addressed the meeting, most of them at considerable length, and with great effect. The Rev. Dr. Bogue, the Rev. Dr. Collyer, Rev. W. Orme, of Perth, W. Wilberforce, Esq. M. P. Rev. Mr. Broadfoot, Rev. Matthew Wilks, Rev. G. Clayton, Rev. J. A. James, W. A. Hankey, Esq. Rev. G. Burder, Rev. Jabez Bunting, (Wesleyan,) and T. Wilson, Esq.

*Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty.*

On Saturday, May 15, the Anniversary Meeting of this Society was held at the Albion Tavern, Aldersgate-street.

Sir James Mackintosh, M. P. took the Chair. After which, T. Pellatt, Esq. one of the secretaries, proceeded to read the Report of the Committee's proceedings. This Report contained a multitude of cases, which had occurred in the past year, of acts of oppression and persecution in various parts of the kingdom, chiefly by clergymen of the establishment. It is utterly impossible to give an abstract of these cases. All of them were disgraceful to an enlightened age and nation, and many of them were affecting in a high degree; especially such as related to depriving of paupers in workhouses of their ordinary allowance of food, (which at best is not superabundant,) for the high misdemeanor of attending a dissenting place of worship!!

After the reading of the Report, John Wilks, Esq. the other secretary, proceeded to comment, in a speech of above two hours, on the various classes of cases which had been detailed. Our limits prohibit us from following the learned gentleman through his most powerful and eloquent address. We must therefore content ourselves with the following imperfect abstract of its conclusion.

He knew that some good persons thought that too much might be said of liberty. But such was not the opinion which the wisest or best men cherished, or which history confirmed. "Above all things liberty," was the exclamation of Selden. And who was Selden? An ardent youth, a warm enthusiast? Grotius said, "Selden is the honour of England." Lord Clarendon, the Tory historian, pronounced him to be a man whom it was not possible excessively to praise. And if civil liberty gives to life its value, to man his nobleness, to nations their pre-eminence, how much more dear must be religious freedom? That

was the liberty which every man who deserves the name of man or christian, should bind around his brow, and place closest to his heart. Nor, in such a cause, should trifles be disregarded. But nothing connected with principles was trifling. So reasoned the most immortal men: the benefactors of the globe. Twenty shillings was the whole amount of the ship money that Hampden refused to pay: he refused, and the Stuarts were expelled. How trifling the demand for indulgencies, which Luther by principle was induced to resist, and so produced the Reformation, which had relieved the world.

On the subject to which he had adverted, let Dissenters then apply to Parliament; and although they may be at first resisted, yet let them renew, renew, renew their applications, and reason, and truth, and religious liberty, must at length prevail.

Every circumstance seemed to demand speedy exertion. The nation was at peace. The persecution of the Dissenters did not decrease. Every possible means was adopted by the members of the established church to increase and consolidate their power. In a recent publication, intitled, "Gravamina Ecclesiae," the Rev. Mr. Dennis, Prebendary of Exeter, protested against every concession Dissenters had obtained. If they advanced, and Dissenters still would retrograde, the distance would be greater, and relief more difficult. He trusted, that was a determination not hastily or imprudently adopted, and that Dissenters would meet with those competent and willing to undertake in Parliament their cause. All must remember with affection the ardour and the honourable zeal with which Mr. Fox devoted his great talents to the furtherance of those views. But he was lost. All too woud recollect that great and good man so recently departed; and the mode of whose departure so much increased our anguish at the loss. Those who remembered how he advocated the cause of the French Protestants, would not have feared the refusal of his support. His was no party attachment to freedom,—no lip profession,—he loved freedom in his heart. With his earliest recollections, the evils of persecution were connected. The first sounds he heard were the sighs of his parents,—expatriated for their religion from their native land. With his growth, the remembrance had grown: and the sentiments would have expired only with his life. Had he been present this day, what indignation would he have felt. Yet his indignation was unselfish, was passionless. It resembled the emotions of holy spirits,—blending abhorrence of the wrong with

pity for the wrong-doer. But he too was lost. Yet they were not without advocates. He was happy to see his friend, Mr. Alderman Wood, present on this occasion. He knew his benevolent heart, — his sagacious head, — his active hand. Nor did the country contain one man more ardently desirous to do good.

But they had also present another advocate for all that was benevolent and wise. He could remember when but a boy, he read his masterly reply to Burke, with eloquence equal to that of Burke. He could but overcome, as he had the cause of liberty to support. With delight too, he had listened to his defence of the freedom of the press. When before Buonaparte, Europe trembled, and our Government yielded to prosecute a defenceless emigrant for the affirmation of the truth, he stepped forward on his behalf, and delivered an oration, which Cicero, when most elated with his own immortal efforts, would have been proud to claim. Indin, too, blessed the hour of his arrival on her shores. He went there to administer justice, and by his administration, lenient though upright, and by the mild exercise of his authority, he was there revered, till they regarded him as a tutelary messenger from heaven.

He has stepped into the situation of Sir Samuel Romilly; and has directed his great and comprehensive mind to the melioration of those laws, which have been justly said to be "written in blood." He has wrapped around him the mantle of the departed Romilly, more honourable than the judicial ermine, the senatorial robe, or the imperial purple. He is not lost! Such a living advocate. Dissenters will possess! Whilst such evils exist, and such duties remain, he could not consent to indulge the wish with which he had commenced, to sing the requiem of the Society, or to chant its dirge. But he did anticipate, that the day would come, when they might chant this requiem, interrupted, perhaps, by shouts of exultation! — No; not with shouts of exultation, but with a calm, and rational, and sublime, and silent joy, which will be felt by men of noble minds, who have attained their rights, — by men, who can think on their forefathers without shame, — who can view their children without sorrow, — who have achieved their freedom, — who have deserved their freedom, — who feel that they are free.

Various resolutions were then moved and seconded by the Rev. Dr. Bogue, Mears. Orme, of Perth, and James, of Birmingham, Collison, M. Wilks, and G. Sloper, Esq., whose speeches we should

be happy to detail, were it at all practicable; but we shall, we trust, be excused for passing them over, that we may give publicity to the truly enlightened and eloquent address by the chairman.

Sir James Mackintosh rose amidst the loudest plaudits, and spoke to the following effect: —

"After the approbation of one's own conscience, I certainly consider, as the best reward of any human action, the approbation of wise and good men, — highest among whom I must place the friends of civil and religious liberty.

"Gentlemen, for every reason, but for the mere performance of duty, I should now be silent. Every thing which truth could say has been already urged. Every thing which I could say, did I possess the talent, or the health, has this day been far surpassed. I declare, that I never, in the whole course of my life, heard, in any assembly, a speech more conclusive, more enlightened, or more eloquent, than that which I have this day heard from your excellent Secretary. And I have been also astonished, as I followed the admirable speech of the eloquent and reverend gentleman, Mr. James. It is my duty, in the first place, to return my thanks; and then to make some general observations on the principles in support of which we have all assembled.

"It is also my duty to say, that I am here, in consequence of the indisposition of my beloved friend, Lord Holland, who, although precluded from being present, I need hardly say, is always present in heart and feelings, whenever the cause of civil and religious liberty is to be sustained; who inherits and acts upon those principles which reflect splendour upon the name of Fox; and who, following the example of his illustrious uncle, has invariably advocated the rights of his fellow-men, to worship God after the dictates of their conscience.

"Gentlemen, it affords me pleasure to succeed a Royal Duke in this situation, as it reflects additional honour on the House of Brunswick, when its princes act upon those principles which placed their family upon the throne; and they could not act more consonantly with those principles, than by placing the great body of Protestant Dissenters, who are the friends of their royal house, who assisted in placing the crown of England firmly on their heads, in the enjoyment of those privileges to which by reason, as well as by right, they are unquestionably entitled. For my own part, from my youth, I have been devoted to the sacred cause of civil and religious liberty; and I cannot but feel high honour, in the singular gratification

of presiding at a Meeting of a great body of Dissenters, the most Protestant part of a Protestant world, the authors of the principles of religious liberty among mankind, the fosterers and preservers of the English constitution.

" This has been well stated by the Rev. Gentleman on my left, (Dr. Bogue,) when he bore a testimony to the virtues and firmness of these individuals, a testimony which was reluctantly extorted from Hume, that great historian and philosopher, but enemy of civil and religious liberty. You have also heard the unspeakable value of religious liberty. No man, or body of men, can be justified in infringing on the privilege of any human being to worship God; and that man who presumes to take such a course, acts not only contrary to the dictates of common sense, but in opposition to the great and divine attributes of Christianity. But it has also been truly stated, that civil liberty cannot exist without religious liberty; and I would state, that civil liberty is also indebted to religion. To the progress of that spirit of justice and paternal benevolence, which religion inculcates, the safety of civil liberty is to be attributed. The spirit of religious liberty went forth at the Reformation. The contests which then took place, although ardent, were unsuccessful. Religious liberty did not appear with that lustre in the eyes of the Reformers which it has since assumed. The Reformers, however, ought not to be accused of intolerance, inasmuch as having gained the one great object of their pursuit, they were justified in supposing that all else would follow.

" I was proud to hear the learned observations of my countryman, Mr. Orme. The first person, he stated, who maintained the true principles of religious liberty in this country, was Dr. Owen, the preceptor of Mr. Locke. I can confirm his testimony. I would also mention another individual greatly entitled to our admiration, and who ably developed these principles,—Sir Harry Vane. His writings are little known to the majority of readers; but he is alluded to disreputably by Hume, though his book contains the principles of religious liberty in three or four pages, in a manner more clear and irrefragable, than I ever remember to have seen.

" As to that part of the Revolution of 1688, in which the privilege of religious liberty was for the first time asserted by law, we find, at that glorious period, that security from persecution was the first object which was obtained. Certainly the Act of Toleration was imperfect, yet it is a subject for congratulation, that the unceasing exertions of your ancestors accomplished the greater part of this Act. I must, in justice to the

memory of King William, say, that if this Act was not more perfect, it was not his fault. If the wishes of King William had been complied with, you would have obtained all you desired. King William was himself a Calvinist: he did not, however, come to England to attack the members of the church of England. He had far nobler objects in view, and yielded his own private feelings to matters of more vital importance. He was a great and excellent man, and no doubt anticipated all that the Dissenters could wish: and all that a belief in Christianity could warrant, under him, would eventually have been obtained. It is well known that he wished all distinction among Protestant sects to cease, and that, with great reluctance, he was compelled to acquiesce in the imperfect scheme of toleration.

" I must express my surprise when I see the Bishops of the Protestant church publicly preaching that a man is not entitled to the privileges of a Christian, unless he unequivocally accords with the Liturgy of the Church. This certainly appears to me extraordinary in a Protestant country; indeed, it would seem that the only difference between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, as a wit humorously said, is, that the one was infallible, and that the other never erred. As long as persons, entertaining such doctrines, obtain high preferment, it will continue our menitrious duty, as the friends of religious liberty, to watch over their conduct; and until the rights and privileges for which you are now contending are attained, I shall say that the ends of the Revolution are incomplete, and the constitution imperfect.

" I have heard with infinite pleasure the resolution you have passed, with respect to the Test Act. I do hope it is not a mere annual formality, but a resolution deliberately formed. And I think those will render the greatest service to the public, who will join in endeavouring to effect the full and unshackled enjoyment of civil and religious liberty throughout the empire.

" Now, gentlemen, I cannot but think it part of my duty, to state to you a principle, which was lately urged in a place of great importance, and by a minister of great moderation, of great discretion and prudence. A question arose in the House of Lords upon a comparison of two measures, one of which was proposed by Lord Grey in 1807, and the other was carried into effect in 1817. The bill was to exempt the Catholics in the army and navy from those oaths which they had declined and refused to take. Lord Grey, in the course of the discussion, said, that the present ministers had now done that

very thing for which he and his friends had been obliged to quit power. Lord Liverpool (whom I very much respect) said, that there was a very great difference between the two measures, and justified his own by stating, that the act of 1807 was a permanent act, while that of 1817 was only an annual act, and left the Catholics, as well as Protestant Dissenters, entirely dependant upon the indulgence of the legislature. This consideration is of the greatest importance to you. You see the principle upon which you are regarded. You are all Dissenters from the Established Church, and whatever power or privilege you enjoy, you owe to the indulgence or moderation of the government, by whom it is only granted from year to year. It is a yearly lease, determinable at the end of the year, at the will of his Majesty's Ministers; and this comes from the deliberate opinion of a most important person in the King's Council, and a person of considerable weight: it was uttered in a place too, and with a deliberation which adds to its weight.

"Permit me to say that I have been refreshed this day by the praises which I have heard bestowed upon liberty, and especially by the imitable speech of your Secretary, which I could devote the day to enlonge. Without any of the cold deliberation of a formal assembly, I have heard it justly stated, and as elegantly as justly, that liberty is essential to greatness and goodness in man. We seek it not alone for ourselves, but for our children. For what was the blood of Hampden, and Sidney, and Russel, shed, but for the cause of liberty? For what was the great King William called great, but for his exertions in the same cause? And for what did William and Somers live, but to establish liberty?

"What we desire is what these great men thought worthy the sacrifice of their lives. And what is liberty, but equal justice among men? And what is more heavenly and godlike than the exertions which are made for the establishment of justice upon earth. It is to secure man against wrong that a form of government is established; but can this be obtained without the possession of civil and religious liberty?

"I must say that I have attended to the important statement which has been made, with instruction as well as with surprise. I was ignorant, till this day, that scenes of vexation, such as have been described, could have occurred in this civilized country; and the knowledge of their existence will certainly induce me to watch with more vigilance every measure connected with this subject, that may be brought before the legislature. I shall be most happy to state every grievance that may be pre-

sented to my notice, and to assist in obtaining for the Dissenters all those rights to which they are entitled. I consider that I should be disgraced in the eyes of this respectable assembly if I did not act publicly upon the principles which I now publicly profess. I therefore solemnly pledge myself, on every occasion, to endeavour to carry into effect the instructions which I have received, and to promote your honourable and enlightened views.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I am now, in my turn, about to require a favour. I am going to beg a reward for the small exertions which I have made. You have been pleased to express your approbation of my humble efforts to amend the *criminal laws* of our country. You are all of you persons of some influence in society, and especially among those whom you love, and who, no doubt, feel for you a reciprocal affection. Let me ask then, that you will employ that influence in forwarding petitions and addresses to promote the object which I have stated. We are surrounded by the ministers of the gospel, whose duty, as well as inclination it is to inculcate the doctrines of humanity. Upon the exertions of these men I may rely, and those who think that, in principle, we ought not to forbear the severe infliction of punishment upon moral guilt, will be pleased to call in mind an observation which was made by a friend of mine, a common-council-man, (Mr. Taylor,) who, when a certain member of that body, got up and quoted the law of Moses as a justification of the laws of England as they stood, most aptly replied, by quoting the words of our Saviour, 'Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but that whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also.' It was the most ingenious retort I ever heard in public debate; and will no doubt remind the ministers of religion of the spirit of the gospel which they preach. I have now only to renew my thanks for the honour you have conferred, and to re-assure you of my anxious desire to promote the attainment of those objects which have been so ably and so conclusively stated by the gentlemen who have addressed you."

Sir James then dissolved the meeting, which had been continued nearly five hours, amidst the strongest expressions of approbation.—We regret that we are not able to furnish our readers with a statement of the sum received and expended, by this excellent Institution, in the cause of Religious Liberty, since its commencement; but no account was given to the meeting. This is an oversight which we have no doubt the Committee will speedily correct.

## LITERARY NOTICES.

The Editors will feel obliged to Literary Gentlemen and Publishers, for the communication of Notices, (Post Paid,) suited to this Department of the CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

## WORKS PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.

Memoirs of the Rev. William Richards, LL.D., with some Account of Roger Williams, Founder of Rhode Island, and first Assertor of complete Religious Liberty in the United States of America. By the Rev. John Evans. The Work is inscribed to the Marquis of Lansdowne.

A Sermon on Home Missions, and the Claims which the Country has on the Zeal of Christians; preached before the Associated Ministers and Churches of Warwick and Worcester, by the Rev. T. East, of Birmingham.

Letters from Palestine, descriptive of a Tour through Galilee and Judea, with some Account of the Dead Sea, and of the present State of Jerusalem. In a handsome octavo volume, illustrated with plates.

An Historical Work on the late Persecutions of the French Protestants; an Account of several Visits to France, and particularly of a Journey to the Southern Departments of that Country. By Rev. Mark Wilks.

Memoirs of the Life of Miss Caroline Elizabeth Smelt, who died on the 21st of Sept. 1817, in the City of Augusta, Georgia, in the 17th Year of her Age. By Moses Weddel, D.D. In post 12mo. price 1s. 6d. in boards.

A New Version of some of the Epistles of St. Paul, and of the Epistle of St. James, is about to be submitted to the public, in a cheap and unostentatious form. The translator has had Campbell in view as to the arrangement and manner of the work, and much care and pains have been bestowed, to exhibit the sense of the Apostles faithfully, clearly, and according to the present idiom of our language.

## SELECT LIST OF WORKS RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

A Funeral Sermon, in Memory of the late Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. delivered at Hanover Chapel, Peckham, and at Salters' Hall, London, March 14, 1819, by William Ben'g' Collyer, D.D. F.S.A. Member of the Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Belles-Lettres, of Dijon, &c. To which is prefixed, an Address delivered at the Intervent, by the Rev. John Townsead. Price 2s.

Moral and Ritual Precepts compared: in a Pastoral Letter to the Baptist Church at Bow, Middlesex; including some Remarks on the Rev. Robert Hall's "Terms of Communion." By William Newman, D.D. Price 1s.

Advice and Encouragement to Sunday School Teachers; an Address delivered by the Rev. William Harris, LL.D. at Hoxton Academy School-house. 2nd edition. Price 1s. 6d.

A Narrative of Robert May, of Woodbridge, a Missionary to the East Indies. Price 6d.

The Trinitarian's Appeal defended, in Answer to a Letter by a Layman. By the Rev. S. Newton. Price 3d.

A Diary, or Precious Promises, &c. arranged for every Day in the Year. Second edition. Price 6d. : fine paper, boards, 1s.

A few Copies of Messrs. Thomson and Orme's Historical Sketch of the Translation of the Scriptures remain on hand, and may be had of Hamilton, Paternoster-row. 3s.

The Conference Reviewed; containing a Summary of the late Transactions among the Methodists of Ireland; and comprising an Apology for the Primitive Wesleyan Methodists attached to the Established Church.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been this month received from the Rev. Messrs. Greathed, — Ellerby. — Thornton. — H. F. Burder. — Philip. — Orme. — Lacey. — Isaac Taylor. — Russel. — N. E. Sloper. — Gollop. — Whitridge. — Dr. Winter. Also from Dr. Conquest. — R. D. — M. C. P. — A Constant Reader. — A Friend. — Astrop. — Elias Pullen. — J. Chaplin. — J. Nunneley. — Veritas. — R. H. — Moses. C. W.'s request would have been more appropriately addressed *first* to the Secretary of the Congregational Board.

"A Friend" is advised to address the absentees by a private admonition, or from the pulpit, rather than through the medium of our Magazine. — We deeply deplore, with Mr. Sandifer, the circumstance to which his communication refers; but think the ribaldry of the preacher at Cambridge too bad to be repeated, even for the sake of caution. — De Lisle is informed, that, however agreeable the opinions expressed in his communication are to our own as individuals, we do not at present intend to pledge ourselves to either side of a controversy on which the nation at large, as well as the Dissenters, are almost equally divided. We are requested, by the Rev. H. Grey, to correct an inadvertence in his speech, recorded in our April Number. The Rev. Drs. Paterson and Henderson were not sent out as Missionaries by the Edinburgh Society, but by the Congregational Churches of Scotland.

*Errata.* In the May Number, p. 274, col. 2, line 13, for "and cothurnus and sonus Sephecia," read *et cothurnus et sonus Sephecia.*